



TEENS BANNED FROM CAR PARK

Report by David Callaghan

TEENAGERS are banned from a car park in Stourbridge under measures to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour.

A new Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) came into force at the Ryemarket pay and display car park yesterday (Wednesday). It will prohibit under-18s from entering the car park unless driving a vehicle themselves or accompanied by a responsible adult.

The order will be in place for three years after a four-week consultation which had 100 per cent support.

A breach of any part of the act can result in a £100 fixed penalty fine. More serious offences can lead to prosecution and/or a fine of up to £1,000.

Shoppers using the car park had complained about gangs of teenagers and skateboarders causing a nuisance.

Windows have been smashed and walls daubed with graffiti.

Councillor Gaye Partridge, Dudley's cabinet member for community safety, said: "We have listened to the concerns of local residents and businesses in regard to anti-social behaviour. With their backing and support, I am pleased to announce the introduction of this Public Space Protection Order in Stourbridge."

Alcohol

"Everyone has the right to be safe and to feel safe and we will be working with the police and will be robustly tackling any breaches of the orders."

The order for Stourbridge prohibits the dealing and use of drugs, legal highs and alcohol, the throwing of objects from upper levels of the car park, the use of skateboards, graffiti, or using paint or pens to damage the building.

Chief Inspector Simon Inglis from Dudley Police, said: "We have worked closely with our local authority partners throughout the consultation phase."

"We are now pleased that we are able to implement the Public Space Protection Order in order to improve the quality of life of this community."

He continued: "Signs will be going up to tell people about the order, which lasts for three years, and we hope to see a fall in anti-social behaviour incidents and a reduction in demand for our officers."

"Ultimately though, what we want to achieve is a change in people's behaviour and create a better place for law-abiding residents."

"We'll continue to work with the Dudley Council partners to identify the most appropriate response to any breaches of the order."

A second PSPO will also be introduced in the Exeter Road and Bowling Green area of Netherton.

END FINALLY IN SIGHT FOR RUBBISH MOUNTAIN



Trash mountain — the eyesore that has blighted nearby homes in Brierley Hill is being removed and the work will take months

WORK is at last under way to clear a huge mountain of rubbish that has been blighting homes in Brierley Hill for more than six years.

Waste once towered to around 40ft at the Refuse Derived Fuel plant, in Moor Street, leading to a campaign from councillors and residents to clean-up the huge eyesore.

The mound, which recently stood at around 19ft, led to a lengthy court battle to have it removed. The saga resulted in High Court action with company director Robert McNaughton jailed for failing to remove it.

However, contractors on Monday moved onto the site to begin preparations to start moving the waste, a process which will take several months.

Taxpayer

Officials from the Environment Agency said that they have been working on the issue.

Mare Liddarth, environment manager at the agency, said: "We've been working closely with the landowners of the former RDF Ltd site to make sure the remaining waste is cleared, but not at the expense of the tax-

payer. The landowners have agreed to fund the clearance of the site and it is expected it will take approximately eight months to clear the rubbish."

"We're informing local residents of these latest developments and would like to thank them for their support and patience."

He added: "We are committed to ensuring that any impact of these works on the community is kept to a minimum and will liaise with the landowners throughout their work clearing the site."

FINANCE

Council tax is set to rise 4 per cent

CASH-STRAPPED Dudley Council is set to raise council tax by nearly four per cent for the next three years in succession.

The authority has revealed plans to increase its share of council tax by 1.99 per cent and take up a Government offer to increase it by a further two per cent for adult social care. This works out at an extra 77p per week or £40.04p per year for people in Band C properties.

Council bosses said that residents would continue to pay the lowest council tax rates in the region despite a proposed increase for the first time in six years.

HEALTH

Hospital must save £12.4m over year

RUSSELLS Hall Hospital in Dudley will have to find £12.4 million worth of savings over the next financial year.

Surveys will be sent out to all staff working at the hospital to find ways of making further cuts. Workshops will also be organised during the 2016-17 financial year, as part of the Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust's continuing cost improvement programme.

The trust has already made cuts of £11.38m during the first eight months of the current financial year.

COMMUNITY

Estate launches second Street Watch

A SECOND Street Watch scheme has been set up on an estate in Wordsley following meetings with a councillor, police and residents.

The group's co-ordinator, Kerry Lewis has said the scheme aims to provide reassurance to the community in a bid to reduce anti-social behaviour.

The second scheme has now been set up on High Acres estate following two meetings. The group have also set up the speed watch scheme, which has been running for just over a year after residents raised concerns over cars consistently breaking speed limits.

INSIDE

PET CAT OWNERS LIVING IN FEAR



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Pool safety review after father's death



Father-of-four Deon Mullings

DUDLEY Council say experts will look at whether any action is required at Middle Pool at the Pens Pool Nature Reserve in Pensnett, Dudley, following the death of Deon Mullings.

Mr Mullings failed to resurface after going into the water to retrieve his daughter's ball in July last year when a family outing turned into tragedy.

Mr Mullings, of Holly Hall, had been playing ball games with his daughters near the pool.

It is not the only incident to have happened in the Middle Pool area of the nature reserve. In 2011 a schoolboy had

to be rescued after falling 25ft down a bank into the water.

Children regularly play by the pool and it is now being considered whether better public protection is needed, such as fences or new warning signs.

Coroner

The council's environmental boss Hilary Bills said experts visited the council-managed site after the incident to see if any immediate changes were needed.

She added that bosses were now waiting for information from the coroner

surrounding the circumstances of Mr Mullings' death before deciding on the next moves to be taken. The council is in the process of preparing a report following the tragedy.

The 35-year-old father-of-four was pulled from the water by rescuers and was taken to Birmingham's Queen Elizabeth Hospital but could not be saved.

Councillor Bills said: "Following this very tragic event officers visited the site to see if any improvements could be made to the area and we are currently awaiting information from the coroner in order to finalise this review."

Claudia opening eyes was the best present

"WHEN she opened her eyes properly that was the best Christmas present you could ask for."

The words of the family of Stourbridge teenager Claudia Visser, who was left in a critical condition after a suspected hit-and-run last month.

Claudia, aged 15, was in a coma after the incident but when she finally woke step-father Graham Southall said it was a shining light in an otherwise 'awful' and heart-wrenching festive period for the family.

The brave teenager is now on the mend and hopes to be home within the next six weeks, although the road to full recovery remains a challenge.

Mr Southall, 49, admitted the family had feared the worst in the early stages.

He said: "It's completely life-changing for her and for the family."

Claudia, of Chaffinch Road, was initially taken to Russells Hall Hospital following the incident on December 17 before being transferred to Birmingham Children's Hospital.

Bedside

Mr Southall and Claudia's mother Simone have spent countless hours at her bedside since, while her father Patrick flew in from his home in Spain to visit his daughter.

The family and other well-wishers have now been given the news they wanted to hear as Claudia's condition has improved markedly.

However, she still needs another operation on her legs and will be in hospital until the middle of the February.

Currently she is also suffering from issues with her memory and could be wheelchair-bound when she finally leaves hospital.

Mr Southall said: "The first week or 10 days were awful - we didn't know if she was going to come out of the coma. But when she did it was amazing."

"When she opened her eyes properly that was the best Christmas



15-year-old Claudia Visser, who was seriously injured in a suspected hit-and-run incident before Christmas

present you could ask for. Her friends have been to see her and about four or five days ago we gave her her phone back."

Claudia is due to have an operation at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham. cannot walk or fully move her arms and is likely to need a prolonged spell in a wheelchair when she finally returns home.

Mr Southall said he anticipates it could be up to a year before she is fighting fit once again.

"Even when she comes out she will need about 12 months to get back to normal," Mr Southall said. "We're actually lucky to have a bedroom downstairs."

"But as for the rest of it we don't really know at the moment. It's still a long road before we know what's going to happen."

Student

Redhill School student Claudia has told her mother and stepfather that she wants to get her back to her studies as soon as possible.

The teenager wants to be a solicitor and doesn't want to fall behind in her

Holocaust survivor to give speech at service

A WOMAN who survived a Nazi concentration camp will be visiting Dudley to speak at the town's annual Holocaust memorial service.

Susan Pollack, who was born in 1930 in Felsőgöd, Hungary, was sent to Auschwitz-Birkenau in May 1944 with her family.

Born Zsuzsanna Blau, she and her brother survived the Holocaust but more than 50 of their relatives did not. Susan's mother was murdered at Auschwitz-Birkenau but the teenager survived ten weeks at the camp before being sent to Germany as slave labour.

Susan married another survivor and now lives in London, a mother of three and grandmother to six.

The service, organised by Dudley North MP Ian Austin and Dudley College Students' Union, has become a fixture in the town's calendar since first held eight years ago.

Hundreds of people heard Holocaust survivor Hannah Lewis describe her experiences of Adampol concentration camp at last year's service.

The commemoration has been organised with the support of the Holocaust Educational Trust.

It will conclude with the ceremonial lighting of the Candle of Remembrance as Mayor of Dudley Councillor Steve Waltho leads faith leaders in a two-minute silence to honour the victims of the Holocaust.

The service is open to all at the Broadway Campus of Dudley College from 12.30pm on January 29.

Murder suspect appears in court

A MAN has appeared at crown court in connection with the death of a Stourbridge man.

Jolless Daniel Jones, aged 33, is accused of murdering 59-year-old neighbour Paul Tompkins in Forge Road, Wollaston.

Jones, of Forge Road, appeared at Wolverhampton Crown Court on Tuesday. He will return to the court for a plea and case management hearing on March 29. He did not enter a plea.

A trial is expected to take place in July.

Scores of tributes have been paid online to Mr Tompkins, who friends knew as 'Tonka'. His body was found on New Year's Day.

Anyone who can help the investigation is asked to call 101.

Cider festival to be held at new bar

A REAL ale 'micro bar' in a former shop unit in Stourbridge is holding its first cider festival.

The event at Barbridge in Victoria Passage, between Talbot Street and High Street, runs from today (Thursday) to Sunday, from noon to 1am.

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MP steps into shoes of visually impaired

AN MP has taken part in a blindfolded dog walk to highlight the experiences of partially or fully blind people walking around Stourbridge.

Margot James, MP for Stourbridge, walked around the town with a guide dog whilst being visually impaired by special glasses.

She was accompanied by guide dog Natalie and the dog's two trainers Andy and Andrea.

At first she walked with a cane whilst wearing the visually impairing glasses, and was later asked to wear a blindfold.

The walk was held in collaboration with the charity Guide Dogs.

Perspective

The Conservative MP said she was shocked by how the experience made her feel.

"I have come away with an entirely new perspective on the needs of blind pedestrians, and will be using this knowledge in the future when addressing the needs of local people," she said.

"I would like to thank Andy, Andrea and the entire Guide Dogs team for their work supporting and improving the lives of blind and partially sighted people."

Every hour another person in the UK becomes blind, meaning a constant demand to train and provide dogs to help them.

For more information about Guide Dogs visit the website www.guide-dogs.org.uk or contact the Midlands branch on 0845 372 7431.

Singing astronaut talks about space

THE astronaut who sang the late David Bowie's Space Oddity while in orbit on the International Space Station (ISS), Colonel Chris Hadfield, is to give a talk in Birmingham next week.

The Canadian former fighter pilot will speak about his 35-year flying career, including an amazing five month stint aboard the ISS. On his last day at the space station, he posted a farewell music video online, strumming and singing his version of Bowie's Space Oddity. It has since been viewed over 26 million times, making him the most famous astronaut since Neil Armstrong.

Tickets are nearly sold out for his illustrated lecture at the Symphony Hall on Tuesday at 8pm. Call 0121 345 0600 or see www.thsh.co.uk

M6 slip road to be closed for months

A MOTORWAY slip road near Birmingham has been closed to motorists for maintenance work lasting months. The M6 southbound entry slip road at Junction 5 near Castle Bromwich is shut until early summer.

Warm tributes paid to Rotary president



Martyn Hall — tributes

TRIBUTES have been paid to a popular Rotary Club president in the Black Country who has died after a short illness.

Martyn Hall, who died on December 29, had been an active member of Stourbridge Rotary Club since 2007 and became president in July last year.

The 70-year-old, from Heath Lane, led the club in a range of fundraising and social activities over recent months.

Mr Hall moved to the Stourbridge area around ten years ago from the Bristol area to be nearer to family. Mr Hall leaves behind wife Sally and step children.

Mr Hall had a successful career in

the chemical industry before retiring to Stourbridge.

He had been an active member of the Rotary Club since 2007 taking on the role of club secretary before becoming president.

Fellow club member, John Savage, said Mr Hall was someone who always took part in activities and organising charity events.

He said: "He was an extremely popular man in the club, who virtually took on the role of club secretary as soon as he joined.

"He was the type of person who would get on with everyone.

"It is such a sad shock that he is no longer with us. He will be very sorely missed and all thoughts are with his family at this sad time."

Mr Savage added that the club would also be making a donation to a charity that Mr Hall supported.

"He was involved in several rotary charities, especially the White House cancer charity in Dudley," he said.

"Therefore the club will be making a donation to them at the end of the year in his memory."

Mr Hall's funeral will take place at Stourbridge Crematorium on January 22.

Bouncer in 'red mist' attack on party-goer

A BOUNCER who punched a party-goer trying to get back into a nightclub in a 'red mist' has been ordered to do unpaid work.

Ian Shields, from Stourbridge, was given 50 hours' community service after appearing at Warwick Crown Court.

Shields, 40, of Old Hall Close, admitted common assault after punching Louis Sutton while working on the doors at a Leamington nightclub in April last year.

Fellow doorman, Conor Bush, 21, of Oval Road, Erdington, pleaded guilty to assault and was given 75 hours of unpaid work.

They had been working on the door at Smack nightclub when the assault happened. Both were given 12-month community orders.

Gurdeep Singh Garcha, for Shields, said: "Louis Sutton is the victim in this case, but we ask the court to have regard to his behaviour that evening.

"These two defendants were exercising their lawful function up until that point when the red mist descended.

"It's the first time in nine years as a doorman Mr Shields has reacted in this way. As a result of this lapse of judgement he is no longer able to carry out that work, which was well paid."

Argument

Prosecutor Sarah Allen said Mr Sutton and a friend were thrown out at about 1am following an argument on the dance floor. They tried to get back in via a side entrance.

Miss Allen said door staff were alerted to what was going on, and Bush and Shields went round to speak to them. Mr Sutton and his friend 'took umbrage' at that and took out their phones to begin recording what was going on.

Shields then took hold of Mr Sutton, who had been sitting on a wall, and a passing street warden described seeing Shields punch the victim.

Miss Allen said Bush, who had been holding the other man, then stepped forward and punched Mr Sutton to the face.

The blow landed with such force that Mr Sutton was knocked onto the bonnet of a taxi, bounced off it and landed in the road. He suffered bruising around his eye and a small cut to his mouth.

Sean Logan, for Bush, said he had never been in trouble before, and is part-way through the process of joining the Army.

Megan has a blossoming career



Megan Evans, of Rowley Regis, has secured a place on the Homebase Garden Academy programme

A STUDENT is on the way to a blossoming career in gardening after gaining a place on a top course.

Megan Evans, 21, from Rowley Regis, has beaten 1,500 applicants to secure a place on the Homebase Garden Academy programme.

The year-long programme aims to develop the skills and knowledge of the students and have them work alongside award-winning garden designer Adam Frost.

Over the next 12 months Megan will spend time learning from Mr Frost about garden planning and design; working with top garden suppliers to develop her product knowledge covering planting and landscaping; and learn practical horticultural skills to earn a RHS Level 1 Award qualification.

As part of the programme she will also be working at Homebase in Oldbury, helping customers with their gardening dilemmas.

"I'm thrilled to have secured a place on the Garden Academy programme and we have already learnt so much," said Megan. "I've always loved gardening, so to be given the opportunity to turn my passion into a career is great."

Jonathon Kemp, head of garden and DIY at Homebase added: "As one of the UK's leading garden retailers, we are committed to championing horticulture as a great career choice.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Time to apply for a primary place

PARENTS across Dudley borough with children due to start primary school in September have been reminded to submit their school applications as soon as possible, if they have not already.

Children born between September 1, 2011, and August 31, 2012, are to start primary school this September.

Parents can apply for their choice of primary school online at www.dudley.gov.uk/admissions, or call 01384 814223 to ask for an application form by post. The closing date for applications is tomorrow (Friday).

Work to improve traffic under way

A FIVE-MONTH scheme to improve bus services and ease congestion around Merry Hill shopping centre began this week.

Traffic lights and bus shelters will be improved as part of the project, which is expected to cause delays in the area.

Work will begin in High Street and Coppice Lane in Quarry Bank. Work will then move on to Coppice Lane and The Boulevard. The scheme is due to be completed in June. Officials say it will improve journey times for both buses and general traffic.

Patient numbers rising at hospital

STRETCHED staff at Dudley's main hospital dealt with a record number of patients arriving by ambulance on one day this month, it has emerged.

A total of 135 patients were brought into the accident and emergency department at Russells Hall Hospital in Dudley last Tuesday, January 5.

It was followed by another 120 patients on Wednesday, January 6, which was a sharp rise on the usual average of between 80 to 90 ambulance trips per day.

Successful kitchen firm is on the move

A KITCHEN retailer in Halesowen is moving premises within the town and creating extra jobs.

3D kitchens.net, based on Halesowen Road, will move to the site of the former Streetbike showroom on Mucklows Hill. A spokesman for the company said: "We currently have 13 staff but moving to new premises will see us create more part-time and full-time roles."

The building has been empty since Streetbike moved in October 2014.

Hall visit for couples

COUPLES can take a look around Himley Hall to see if it is the wedding venue for them. A free open day will be held next Sunday, January 24, from 11am to 4pm. Brides and grooms-to-be can tour the historic hall's rooms, which offer views down towards the lake and 180 acres of grounds.

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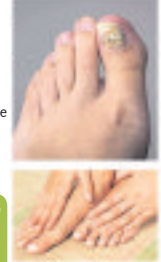


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THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



SIDDHARTH Dhar, the British man suspected of appearing in the latest Islamic State murder video, was arrested in London in 2014. He was accused of belonging to the banned group Al-Muhajiroun and released on police bail. A few hours later he and his family simply hopped on a bus to Paris and then travelled to IS-controlled Syria. You may like to ponder this the next time some grinning security official confiscates your shampoo at the airport, or some pompous politician thunders on about "protecting our borders." Dhar's case is yet more proof that, whether undesirable are coming or going, Britain's borders are about as secure as a colander.

ANYONE who remembers the drought of 1976 will be wary about the latest plans to dredge rivers to let these billions of gallons of unwanted flood water escape into the sea as quickly as possible. Come August, we may wish we'd saved a bit.

YES, it was petty, vindictive and short-sighted. But the most worrying thing about Jeremy Corbyn's shadow cabinet reshuffle was that it was agonisingly slow. Assuming he ever got to Downing Street, how would this great thinker, debater, negotiator and all-round procrastinator react to a sudden crisis?

FOR four days the German media ignored an inconvenient truth. It was that on New Year's Eve a gang of up to 1,000 boys and men of North African or Arab appearance had poured into Cologne to rape, grope, mug and generally terrify women in what appeared to be a planned assault.



The local police chief describes the outrage as "a completely new dimension of crime." There were similar incidents in other German cities. A mass protest by women followed. Chancellor Merkel has expressed her disgust and the media have, at last, taken up the story ("Cologne inquiry into 'co-ordinated' New Year's Eve sex attacks" - Guardian, etc). It is bad enough that such a thing could have happened and been hushed up by the forces of political correctness. But it raises a truly terrifying question. If 1,000 alienated young males can organise an attack in the heart of a Western city for sexual purposes, what else might they do?

E-CIGARETTES may soon be available on prescription to help smokers give up the habit. One of the biggest manufacturers of these vaping devices is British American Tobacco. Which means our beloved NHS could soon be handing millions of pounds of our taxes over to the fag-makers.

SWITCHED on the radio to hear some totally disconnected sound-bite? I tuned in to catch a debate on Marks & Spencer where someone was "getting his teeth into the women's wear issue."

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

We don't want more tests for pupils

EDUCATION chiefs have given their reaction to proposals to introduce a numeracy test for primary school pupils.

Education Secretary Nicky Morgan wants all children to know their times tables up to 12x12 before they reach secondary school. But some have criticised the idea.

Penelope Thompson, headteacher at Glebefields Primary School in

Tipton, said: "I am having a meeting with senior leaders about it. But generally I think there are too many exams."

"I would say for an area such as the one my school is in the new Government's raised level of expectation is going to be very difficult for children to meet."

"The maths test the children are going to be put in this year requires

children to have a good knowledge of their times tables, so I don't want more tests."

Dudley's Councillor Hilary Bills, a former headteacher, also criticised the proposal.

She said: "For me it is a bit of an insult. It is like the Government is saying children don't already learn their times tables. Well, they do and always have done."

"I would say two things, first why up to 12 times tables? We don't work in imperial measurements. Secondly, this is just a way of the Government saying 'look at that wonderful thing we have done' to make them sound like they are doing something important."

"If I was a headteacher still and this landed on my desk I would shrug my shoulders."

More than one million leisure centre visitors

By David Callaghan

MORE than one million people have visited leisure centres in the Dudley borough over the last 12 months, new figures show.

The figure is marginally down from the previous year, but bosses have praised the number of people who continue to stay fit and active in the borough.

Between April 2013 and March 2014, there were around 1.27 million visits logged to leisure centres in Dudley, Halesowen and Stourbridge. In the same period a year later there were more than 1.25 million visits.

The council says an increase in the range of activities on offer, and a £1.5 million revamp of gyms has helped attract people.

Leisure boss Councillor Khurshid Ahmed has highlighted the schemes available to users.

He said: "More than 1,255,000 visits were made to our leisure centres last year, which shows that our leisure services continue to be popular with people. There has been an increase of nearly 7,000 visitors to Halesowen and Crystal leisure centres and Dudley Leisure Centre has continued to attract hundreds of thousands of visitors despite competition from budget gyms."

Motivated

"The centres have regularly updated fitness programmes to keep users motivated and in December we launched the 'merry fitness' deal, offering a 12-month adult membership for just £200."

"Leisure facilities form part of the wider consultation on the budget which is open to the public until early next year."

The £1.5 million investment in leisure centre gyms in 2008 was followed by a huge rise in membership figures, from 600 to nearly 4,000 by October 2014.

Neighbouring borough Sandwell reported a similar rise in visitor numbers to its leisure centres, with around 1.6 million visits logged between April 2013 and March 2014.

Super slimmer Laurence helps hospital



Slimmer Laurence Evans with Slimming World members Sandra Jones, left and Lynn Lacey at Russells Hall

AN inspirational slimmer from Stourbridge has raised more than £5,000 to support a cancer ward at Russells Hall Hospital.

Laurence Evans, who attends a Slimming World group in Oldswinford, came up with the idea of walking 500 miles and cycling 250 miles to raise funds for the Georgina unit over the past 12 months.

The 69-year-old shed 2st 10lbs in 12 weeks after joining the group at St Mary's Church Hall in June 2012. His change in lifestyle has enabled him to keep at his chosen target weight for more than three years.

Mr Evans said: "I joined Slimming World initially to support my wife Carole who was already a member. However, I realised I needed to make some changes

when a BUPA medical highlighted I was borderline diabetic. I thought losing weight meant missing out but through our weekly group meetings I've learned you can eat delicious filling food, enjoy wine and still eat out at least once a week and still be fit and healthy."

Mr Evans lost more than four inches from his waist. He was originally 13.2 stone and went down to 10.12 stone. He explained that regular walks with his wife had given him a new lease of life.

Other Slimming World members, Sandra Jones and Lynn Lacey, helped him raise more than £3,000. A further £1,000 was gathered from ticket sales to the Slimming World Awards Ball at the Copthorne Hotel with the amount matched by Barclays Bank.

No mystery as author tops chart with novel

SHE has already sold her one millionth novel and now a former security guard's third book has reached the top of a book chart.

Lost Girls is Angela Marsons' third book in her detective trilogy, and this week it stands at the top of the Amazon murder fiction chart.

The 47-year-old from Brierley Hill has already sold one million copies from the trilogy, which also include Evil Games and Silent Scream. They were only published last February.

Miss Marsons then gave up on her job of 19 years as a security guard at Merry Hill shopping centre.

She said: "It was just so totally unexpected where the book has got in the charts. I just never ever expected this kind of response."

Her debut novel Silent Scream has gone on to sell over 600,000 copies and was the number one Amazon bestseller in the UK for more than a month.

It also reached the top 5 in the US and has secured deals in ten countries, from Germany to Lithuania. Her follow-up novels, Evil Games and Lost Girls, both hit the Amazon UK top ten. They feature no-nonsense Detective Kim Stone and have a Black Country setting.

Miss Marsons said: "The books have topped the charts before but this is the first time it has topped the Murder Fiction chart. It is feels fantastic."

It comes after 25 years of rejections from publishers when she feared she would never fulfil her ambition of seeing her writing in print.

Rock night in aid of Age Concern

A BLACK Country performer will perform in Stourbridge this weekend.

Bev Pegg and his All Star Rock 'n' Roll Band appear at Stourbridge Lawn Tennis and Squash Club, in Sugar Loaf Lane on Saturday, bringing a nostalgic night of pop from the late-1950s and early-60s.

Their repertoire is wide, comprising of more than 500 songs.

Playing with Bev are Ricky Cool on sax, vocal and harmonica, Ted Bunting and Dutch Lewis on sax, Brian Godwin on keyboard, Terry Edwards on bass guitar and drummer Ken Wright.

The function starts at 8.30pm and doors will be open at 8pm. Tickets cost £12. Call Ken Cowdry on 01384 392590. Proceeds will go to Age Concern in Stourbridge.

Thatched cottage is damaged in a blaze

A FIRE in a thatched cottage in Romsley, caused by a light fitting in the bathroom, caused damage to part of the roof and bedroom.

Five fire engines attended the scene in Farley Lane at around 9.20am after receiving a call from the owner.

Sat-Sun 10am-4pm

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NEWS IN BRIEF

New courses for over-50s to enjoy

A PROJECT in Dudley funded by the Big Lottery has launched a new activity programme for people over 50.

The Springboard Project, based on Waterfront East, Level Street, Brierley Hill offers a variety of activities, courses, trips and events.

There is a Men's Morning where they can play cards, dominoes, table tennis or darts and have a chat.

Courses start on January 18, ranging from jogging for ladies to digital photography and family history.

Call (01384) 571830 or email springboard@ageukdudley.org.uk

Takeaway's roof damaged in blaze

A FIRE broke out in a takeaway in Brierley Hill at the weekend, setting the roof alight.

Fire crews were called to Kings takeaway in High Street, Brierley Hill, on Sunday at 10.15am.

Part of the roof was destroyed as ducting had caught fire and set alight the wooden beams. Two fire crews from Brierley Hill were at the scene for two hours.

Watch Manager Pete Cherrington said: "Thankfully no one was there at the time so there were no injuries. The premises were smoke logged."

Play double bill at Little Theatre

DUDLEY Little Theatre is presenting a double bill of nightclub-themed drama to start its 2016 programme.

The one-act plays Bouncers by John Godber and Shakers by Jane Thornton are being performed in Netherton Arts Centre in March.

Tickets are £8 for the 7.30pm performances from March 9 to 12, available on (01384) 872583, 07582 318017 or 07954 424555. They are also available through the theatre's website at www.dudleylittletheatre.org

Flocking to join bird walk held on common

A WINTER bird identification walk is being held at a wildlife reserve close to both Stourbridge and Kingswinford.

The walk around Highgate Common on Saturday, January 23, is taking place from 10am to 12 noon when enthusiasts can join wildlife experts.

Places can be booked with Staffordshire Wildlife Trust on (01384) 221798 and cost £5.

The price will also include refreshments including a hot drink and a cake.

Social club hosts quiz

A CHURCH social club is urging people to test their general knowledge in a quiz. St Chad's Church hall in Oak Street, Coleley, is hosting its quiz on January 23 from 8pm.

Tickets are £6 with buffet supper. Call John and Carol on 01902 671710 or 07770 976817.

Isis threat thug jailed after metal pole attack

A MAN who claimed he was part of terrorist group Isis before attacking a man with a metal pole has been jailed.

Craig Nandi made the claims to bystanders. Outside Walsall railway station the 34-year-old attacked his victim with a metal pole he had found.

He was jailed for 16 months at Wolverhampton Crown Court after pleading guilty to a racially aggravated assault, possession of a class B drug, possession of an offensive weapon and religiously aggravated provocation.

The court heard Nandi attacked a man on August 4, saying 'We're Isis, and we'll destroy you'. While on police bail, he threatened to burn down the Royal Car Wash in Bloxwich.

Judge Andrew Lockhart QC said Nandi, of Field Road, Dudley, had 'plainly targeted' his victim by his membership of a racial group. The judge added: "You used very frightening language."

Nandi was sentenced to eight months for racially aggravated assault, concurrently with eight months for possession of the weapon and one month for possession of drugs. He was sentenced to eight months to run consecutive for the religiously aggravated incident at Bloxwich — making a total of 16 months — and ordered to pay a victim surcharge of £100.

The judge said Nandi had an 'appalling record' of 32 convictions.

Mr Simon Williams, defending, said Nandi was 'remorseful', adding: "It's clear that Mr Nandi's mouth has got him into a lot of problems. He believes he needs some form of counselling."

Council award for customer service

DUDLEY Council's customer service has been recognised with an award for the eighth year running.

The council's corporate and customer services division has retained the Government's Customer Service Excellence standard following a recent assessment.

Areas recognised by the award include the council's contact centre, Dudley Council Plus, as well as housing and council tax benefit, council tax and business rate collection, citizenship and registration.

Councillor Judy Foster, cabinet member for corporate and customer services said: "We are delighted to retain this national recognition for the eighth year running. Customer service is at the heart of what we do."

Free storyteller session at library

WANT to hear a story — there will be a free storytelling session with Karice Horsley in Stourbridge Library in the Crown Centre.

It will be held tonight (Thursday), from 7.30pm.

Ex-head charged over child images



Ross Workman

A FORMER headteacher from Stourbridge has been charged with making indecent images of children.

Ross Workman is accused of six offences of making an indecent photograph or pseudo-photograph of a child. He will appear before Dudley magistrates on February 3.

Workman, formerly of Stourbridge, was arrested by detectives from the force's Online Child Sexual Exploitation Team on November 3, 2014.

He was suspended from his role as headteacher at Oldswinford CE Primary School, in Oldswinford, Stourbridge, at

that time. Following his arrest, letters were sent to parents of pupils at the Field Lane school, informing them of the investigation.

Dudley Council say Mr Workman is no longer employed by the local authority in a teaching role.

West Midlands Police spokesman Deb Edmonds said: "At the time of his arrest, the Dudley school where he is employed was informed and, in keeping with nationally agreed safeguarding protocol, the man was immediately suspended.

"At this stage of the inquiry there is no evidence of any inappropriate contact

between the teacher and pupils at the school. Letters were sent to parents at the school informing them of the investigation."

Officials from the Diocese of Worcester, which oversees Oldswinford Primary, said they were co-operating with police.

In a statement, Director of Education for the Diocese of Worcester, Ann Mundy said the safety of pupils was a priority.

"Mr Workman was suspended from his role as Headteacher of Oldswinford CE Primary following his arrest and the school has co-operated fully with the police investigation," she said.

Trains deal proves a rail disappointment

RAIL campaigners have said services on the Stourbridge line will not improve after London Midland was allowed to continue running them.

The operator has extended its contract until October 2017 and has announced improvements on some of its lines.

But there are claims that passengers who use the Stourbridge line have missed out. Rob Hebron, chairman of Stourbridge Line User Group (SLUG), said the service needed to be made better. He claims there have been a number of problems, including technical faults on trains and shortages of carriages.

Bosses at London Midland said the line is one the best performing on its network.

Mr Hebron said he was disappointed no improvements to services on the line via Stourbridge were included in the announcement.

"We have a good service but it could be even better," Mr Hebron said. "We are hopeful for improvements under the next franchise from 2017 and the 'Movement for Growth' transport strategy."

Movement for Growth is the region's proposed transport strategy developed by the West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority.

Ignored

London Midland announced earlier trains to Birmingham on Sundays from Rugby and Lichfield and new Sunday services from Longbridge, Dorridge and Whitlocks End.

SLUG say changes called for on the Stourbridge line, including better evening services and earlier trains on Sundays, have been ignored.

London Midland spokesman Francis Thomas said: "We work closely with our rail user groups, including SLUG and always welcome their feedback. The Worcester-Kidderminster-Stourbridge-Birmingham line is one of the best performing routes on our network."

"In the last four years passengers have benefited from the introduction of over £40 million worth of new trains, which are among the most reliable in the country. The direct award contract is only a short period so any further substantial improvements are better addressed as part of the longer contract from 2017 onwards.

"In the meantime local rail users will still see improvements as we continue to invest in better passenger information, improved maintenance, ticket machine upgrades and environmental initiatives."

Owners fight back over lost cats



Worried Kate Antill, 49, of Linton Road, with moggy Tilly, one pet that has come home after going missing

DISTRAUGHT pet owners fear their cats are being targeted and killed after 23 have been lost from three streets in the Black Country in just two years.

Some have vanished without trace while some cats have died after being poisoned with anti-freeze.

Most of the cats have disappeared from three streets in Cradley Heath.

Foster parent Kate Antill, of

Linton Road, has lost seven cats — three from poisoning and four which are missing.

The 49-year-old mother of four said: "It's heartbreaking to lose so many cats in so such a short space of time, and it's upsetting for my children. They have seen the effects of anti-freeze on the cats — it's a horrible way to die. We fear what has happened to the others. It is too much to believe they haven't also been harmed."

Angela Gelencser, aged 60, founder of the Halesowen-based charity Wild Acre Rescue, which re-homes cats, also lost her cat Bramble. "Spiteful people who hate cats using their gardens poison them and mistreat them but they are living creatures and need to be respected," she said.

A Facebook page has been set up by worried pet owners and they are considering bringing in a detective agency.

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It's been a crazy few months for Cloudy2Clear Windows. The company which specialises in repairing windows which are steamed up, broken or damaged by replacing the panes – not the frames has grown rapidly as homeowners take advantage of their services.

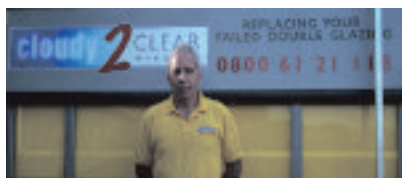
Managing Director Brian Stanley feels that it's all about service. "Our product is simple. If your double glazing is misted up we can replace the glass at a fraction of the cost of a new window, in any type of frame, and with a new 5 year guarantee. But it's not just about saving people

money, although that obviously helps. Many tradespeople have struggled since last year and I honestly feel that during the good times a minority perhaps didn't focus on customer care as much as they should have done.

We make sure we turn up when we say we will, do the job the customer requires and leave their house as clean as a whistle. I often get comments back from customers on how they really didn't expect that sort of service which, in a way, is very sad for the service industry as a whole."

Cloudy2Clear service Wolverhampton and the surrounding

area and Brian is finding that his approach is a major factor in his success. "The truth is that it's not just the personal satisfaction that I get from doing a good job but also it makes good business sense. I get a huge amount of business from friends and family of people



I've done work for, which just goes to show how much a little bit of effort is appreciated."

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IN MY VIEW

with Mark Andrews



Spending lots on sink estates not the answer

FROM what we are constantly being told, you would be forgiven for thinking we lived in times of austerity, what with museums, libraries and police stations closing left, right and centre.

But when it comes to the sort of grandiose, 'legacy' projects that all politicians love, it is amazing how easy it is to find the odd £100 million or so. This week the Prime Minister pledged to end problems with crime, gangs, drugs and unemployment by splashing out £140 million on transforming Britain's 100 worst estates.

I think we know the drill. Spectacular footage of 1950s tower blocks crashing to the ground, 'partnerships' with construction companies, the mayor in a high-viz jacket laying the foundation stone. And a few months down the line, reports start filtering through about peaceful neighbourhoods disrupted by "problem" families which have been relocated.

Do they really think it is that easy? Give the local gang leader a shiny new flat and solar panels, and he turns into a stalwart of the neighbourhood watch committee?

The sad truth is there are some people with a less-than-healthy attitude towards their neighbours, and they do have to live somewhere - somewhere that is nowhere near us. We don't need to demolish the sink estates, just move the law-abiding residents out. Leave the asbo families to fight it out among themselves.

WOLVERHAMPTON is not a city. The Black Country doesn't exist. And all the major towns of the West Midlands are really just suburbs of Birmingham.

Yes, that is the criteria of the not-especially thoughtful think-tank Centre for Cities, which argues that because the area between the West Midlands' major towns and cities are predominantly built up, they all count as a single economic area. And yet, because there is a strip of greenery between the Black Country and Telford, the new town actually does constitute a city, even though it doesn't have what most of us would recognise as a town or city centre.

They probably don't realise this, but in the rush hour you can drive from the Black Country to Telford in about half an hour, the same journey to Brum will take double, maybe treble that. So which will have the closer economic ties?

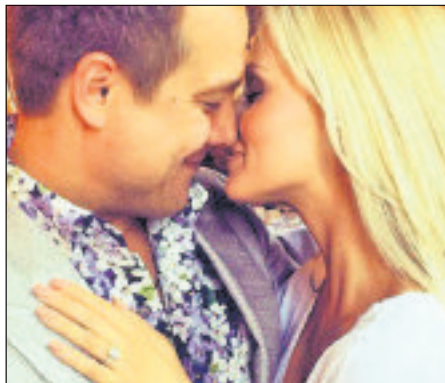
The worrying thing is, when we get the combined authority forced on us, it will be think-tanks like this advising local and central government on where the money should go. Just bostin, ay it?

SELF-appointed national treasure Stephen Fry has been chosen as the face to greet arrivals at Heathrow Airport, offering visitors tips on British etiquette.

They're missing a trick, as it would have been better to have used his film at the Jungle in Calais. It would put me off jumping in a refrigerator truck to Dover.



Angus Mitchell, one-time playboy and a skilled hairdresser



Perfect couple? - how they were portrayed in the public eye



Blonde beauty - Sian is now barred from leaving California

The model, billionaire and the custody fight

ROB GOLLEDGE looks at one Staffordshire family's fight for custody which could be straight out of a US soap opera

IT WAS the fairytale marriage of a girl from a Staffordshire village and a Hollywood tycoon.

But now model Sian Mitchell and her husband Angus, the heir to the one billion dollar Paul Mitchell beauty empire, are in a bitter legal battle over their divorce and the custody of their son.

Sian, from Great Wyrley married Mr Mitchell last year and gave birth to Dylan seven months ago. But 19 days later, divorce proceedings were taken against Mrs Mitchell.

She has been banned from leaving California with her baby by the US courts, meaning she is trapped in the West Coast state.

Mrs Mitchell's grandmother Pauline Morgan has said that she has had to 'pay the price for falling in love'. Mrs Morgan, from Love Lane, said she has not seen her granddaughter for 15 months. "All Sian wants to do is to come to the UK for a holiday, yet these legal battles are forbidding her to leave," she said.

Flown

"It has all happened so quickly, we are all in shock. They seemed incredibly happy together and even were due to have a separate marriage over here in November. They seemed perfect together. He would even call me Nan," she added. "It's heartbreaking. She's paying the price for falling in love."

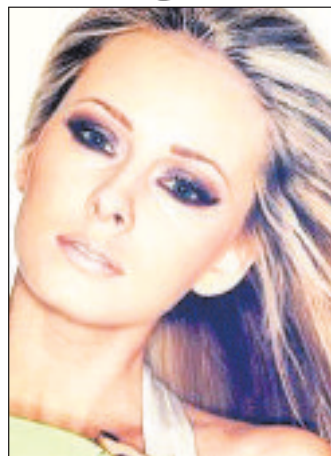
Because of the ban, Mrs Mitchell's family are yet to meet the new arrival. Her mother Debra has flown out to be with her.

The case has been raised for the first time by South Staffordshire MP Gavin Williamson. He has delivered a petition of 154 family and friends of Mrs Mitchell calling on the British Government to do all it can to assist her.

Mr Williamson told the Commons: "My constituent Sian Mitchell moved to the United States last year, following her engagement



All smiles together, but now there is a bitter battle, with millions of dollars at stake



Sian met Angus while modelling in the US

and marriage to an American citizen. Sadly, shortly after the birth of her son earlier this year, her marriage fell apart.

Her multi-millionaire husband, Mr Angus Mitchell, has taken out court orders preventing Sian from taking her child out of the State of California until proceedings have been resolved, making it as difficult as possible for her to bring up her son in the way she wishes.

"Sian is away from her family and relies on their emotional support during this extremely difficult time. She is desperate to return home to the United Kingdom with her child to allow her family to have the chance to meet this little boy for the first time."

Mrs Mitchell grew up in Great Wyrley where she was known as Sian Morgan. She went to school in Brewood and was a member of the girl band ICandy which made it through to the X Factor boot camp in 2010. She was also

named Miss Coventry in the same year. She is now in her mid-20s.

Mr Mitchell, 45, was born into the legacy of late legendary hairstylist Paul Mitchell. He was educated by Vidal Sassoon stylists and started to craft his own signature style. He travels the world for hair events on behalf of Paul Mitchell. He lives in Los Angeles.

It is believed he met Mrs Mitchell while she was modelling in the States.

The Paul Mitchell luxury hair brand is reportedly worth more than 1 billion dollars per year. Paul Mitchell was born in Carnwath, Scotland, in 1936, but was initially called Cyril. He went on to become a nationally-renowned hairdresser and moved to New York in 1960 after being invited by Vidal Sassoon and his empire was born. He died in 1989 aged 53.

His son Angus now runs the business with his father's original business partner John

Paul DeJoria. The petition delivered to the Commons states: "The petitioners believe that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Government should offer as much support and assistance to her as possible so she can return to the UK. The petitioners therefore request that the House of Commons urges the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Government to make representations to the US Government and the State of California to press the issue and get a resolution to the problem at the earliest possible stage."

Mr Williamson added: "This is an incredibly sad case and I have asked the Government to do all it can in offering consular advice to Mrs Mitchell and her family. Her family in Great Wyrley are desperate to meet the baby for the first time and concerned for Mrs Mitchell who is after all, a young woman caught up in legal proceedings in a foreign country."

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Hippodrome can put town back on the map

B Osborne, Dudley, wrote no serious theatre company has applied to save Dudley Hippodrome in the last 30 years — the simple fact being that there was never any reason until now. It was never threatened with being demolished.

While singing the praises of council members, B Osborne fails to acknowledge that under these council members Dudley fell into decline.

It is disputed that the Hippodrome could be a wonderful business opportunity. How did they compile such evidence when other theatres are thriving

in other areas? Dudley was at one time a lively town, the shopping compared well with Birmingham and Wolverhampton, with thriving zoo, Hippodrome, even a small rollerdrome and cinemas.

If council members want to bring Dudley into the 21st century they need to revitalise it, not let it decline. Follow the example of other councils with leisure, entertainment areas, in some cases ice rinks — and their theatres are still part of the entertainment drawing in thousands of visitors.

The coming of the Metro line is an

ideal opportunity to put Dudley back on the map.

B Osborne expresses concern about the looks of the Hippodrome, yet says nothing about how the area would look if it was flattened and the problems that could arise. Dudley has had more than its fair share of demonstrations over land.

It's not only Dudley that needs bringing into the 21st century, it's the council members who are responsible for its decline.

H J ROPER
Tipton

Corbyn's choice is a shambles

THE blessed Jeza has promoted Emily Thornberry to the position of Shadow Defence spokesperson. Great choice!

Her CV for a Jeremy Corbyn post is exemplary. She's anti-Trident, been paid £14,500 by Leigh Day and Co – the now disgraced law firm who have tried to concoct stories to blacken the names of our troops and make millions for themselves – and, of course, way back she was a Socialist Worker activist whilst at university.

The full package we now have on defence of the realm is Emily, Ken Livingstone well-known for his efforts to bring peace to Ireland, the Middle East, etc, and Jeremy himself with his links to various organisations whose aim is to weaken our Armed Forces.

Let us fervently hope for the safety of ourselves and future generations that Labour never achieve power.

A M ETHERIDGE
Dudley

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

Dudley Chronicle,
Chronicle Editorial,
51-53 Queen Street
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

EMAIL

dudley.chrons@
expressandstar.co.uk

Letters should be brief and **MUST** include name, address and telephone number number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

Ranting dog owners are a selfish bunch

WHAT a selfish bunch you are! The dog owners ranting about the 'dog ban' at Himley Hall.

Why should dog owners have the monopoly on the park? Maybe you need reminding it is a stately home, public grounds and gardens, it is not a dog park! Why shouldn't everyone enjoy it?

Your dogs may not have been any trouble, unfortunately this isn't always the case. I have seen many incidents over the years, a young child during a picnic being knocked to the ground distraught when a dog ran at the food. I was nearly knocked to the ground by two dogs, the owner couldn't have cared less. My son had to put himself between a dog and his young daughter who was in her pushchair, it doesn't bear thinking about what could have happened if he hadn't. Someone's dog was attacked by another dog although hers was on a lead. A lady who was disabled asaid she was so nervous of the dogs running around she wouldn't be coming back, it goes on and on.

So you are upset that a third of the park will be a dog-free zone, well you have the other two thirds don't you, isn't that enough?

M J TAYLOR
Sedgley

Absurdity of gender neutrality

I SEE that Maria Miller has now turned her attention to the promotion of the transgender cause following on from her successful achievement with gay marriage.

Among her proposals is that nobody should declare gender so that everybody becomes gender neutral.

The absurdity of this, apart from being offensive to the majority of the gender normal population, was soon apparent on BBC's Newsnight, when one of the speakers pointed out that sexual equality, e.g. wage equality could not be monitored.

The other speaker, who was very pro the argument, said they did not want to be bound by gender.

Just what is meant by that escapes me.

I hope Miss Miller's constituents are satisfied that their interests are being protected while she is absorbed in this fringe subject.

A DRING
Kingswinford

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Jack Carter, aged 13, from Stourbridge, shows his dance moves



Thirty-year-old singer-songwriter Simon Lacks, from Bromsgrove, AKA Heinz-Sight



Audition hosts Warren Evans and Andy Dingley, of Base Studios and Video



The hopeful performers were filmed in action for the TV show's producers

Black Country's Got Talent

HIP-HOP dancers, a 20-piece school choir and singer-songwriters – they all braved the stage in Stourbridge with a burning desire to become the next star of Britain's Got Talent.

More than 100 musicians and dancers queued up at Base Studio dreaming of being Simon Cowell's latest protégé.

The official first round of the series saw producers from Thames TV take note of about 40 acts on Friday night who filled out their forms

and are now patiently waiting to see if they have successfully made it through to the televised section.

Among them was Jack Carter, 13, from Stourbridge, who attends Pedmore Technology College. He attended the audition with support from his father, Darren, and wowed the audience with a series of hip-hop dance moves.

"I was really nervous up there and all I could see was a big lens in my face," he said.

"I've always wanted to be a dancer and I try and copy some of the moves I see on YouTube."

Thirty-year-old singer-songwriter, Simon Lacks, from Bromsgrove, who goes by the

stage name Heinz-Sight, performed a song accompanied by his acoustic guitar song for the producers.

He said: "I think this sort of event is good for the community and it helps to get all these performances out there."

"For the youngsters it's a great experience – we're all hoping to become the next big thing."

"I've been a musician since I was about 17 and I've done it professionally for the last two years. I've released a few songs on Spotify, iTunes and Amazon and I'm working on a new album at the moment."

Studio owner Warren Evans said he was

first contacted by the producers of BGT two months ago and the excitement surrounding the TV show had seen its post about auditions on Facebook viewed more than 90,000 times.

"It's been a privilege to host something like this in Stourbridge," he said. "This is the first round and if they're successful they will be in front of the judges next time."

"There have been some great acts, including the 20 youngsters from a Roman Catholic school in Hagley."

"It's been a very proud moment for us and it's great to promote the musical heritage we have here in Stourbridge."

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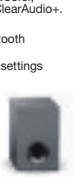
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Swimmer drowned after his heart failed

A PENSIONER from Halesowen drowned after suffering heart failure while swimming at a gym pool, an inquest heard.

Raymond Short, from Halesowen, was found at the bottom of a swimming pool at the DW Sports and Fitness centre in Kidderminster by a fellow gym member. He was pulled from the water by swimmers and a cleaner but was pronounced dead in hospital later.

An inquest at Stourport Coroner's Court heard how swimmer Stephen Parkins raised the alarm when the 79-year-old, of Blackberry Lane, failed to resurface on August 25 last year.

Mr Short, who used the gym twice a week, had been swimming under the water and travelled a length before stopping.

Mr Parkins told the hearing: "I swam to the far end of the pool and as I swam back I noticed movement under the water. I turned around to do another length and noticed he hadn't come towards me. He still appeared to be in the same position. I am deliberating for a few seconds thinking he should have been up by now. That's when I got concerned and alerted the cleaner."

By Richard Guttridge

No other gym staff were at the poolside apart from the cleaner but staff were quickly alerted and began administering CPR while they waited for paramedics.

Mr Short was taken to the Worcestershire Royal Hospital but could not be saved.

Worcestershire assistant coroner David Reid heard pool checks were carried out every 15 minutes. Reception staff checked CCTV every half an hour and someone would go to the poolside to check 15 minutes either side. Since the tragedy, pool checks have been carried out every 10 minutes.

Doctors concluded Mr Short drowned after suffering a 'cardiac arrhythmic event'.

Mr Reid recorded a verdict of accidental death.

Big Sam books his place in final



The autobiography by Sam Allardyce joins the story of Steven Gerrard's career on the prize nominations

DUDLEY-BORN football manager Sam Allardyce will join former England star Steven Gerrard on the list for the best sports autobiography of 2016.

Sunderland boss Allardyce will join the ex-Liverpool captain in competing for Autobiography of the Year at the Cross Sport Book Awards.

Allardyce has had a long career in football, taking Bolton to the Europa League as well as playing for West Bromwich Albion and Coventry City. His autobiography, *Big Sam*, charts his 43-year career, from his early days at the Sky Blues to his current position as manager of the Black Cats. He made more than 400 appearances, playing for Bolton, Sunderland, Millwall, Tampa Bay Rowdies, Coventry, Huddersfield, Preston North End, West Bromwich Albion and Limerick. In management he took charge of Limerick, Blackpool and Notts County before managing Bolton.

The former Baggies assistant manager is nominated alongside 20-time Champion Jockey A.P. McCoy, six-time world snooker champion Steve Davis and 1991 Formula One Champion Nigel Mansell.

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Mud, sweat and tears to fight cancer



Glorious mud — fundraisers got Pretty Muddy at a new Race for Life event at Weston park in aid of Cancer Research

GET those trainers ready girls — it's time to give cancer a good kicking by taking part in the region's Race for Life events 2016.

Women of all shapes and sizes are being urged to get the New Year off to a great start by signing up now to the Cancer Research fundraising events.

The charity is calling on females to join the battle against cancer by choosing their event — Race for Life 5k, 10k or Pretty Muddy — and committing to take part at an event.

The charity has a series of 5k, and 10k races, which also feature an obstacle course, taking place in Dudley,

Wolverhampton and Walsall this summer. The races will be held from April to June, so women signing up now will create a goal to work towards.

Taking part is also a way of paying tribute to a loved one whose life was cut short by the disease and to celebrate those who have survived.

Katy Barley, Cancer Research UK's Event Manager, said: "Taking part is not about being fit or fast and participants can choose to walk, jog, or run around the course. The atmosphere is incredibly supportive.

"Pledging to take part, alongside thousands of like-minded women, can

be a great incentive to get fitter. Planning to raise money for life-saving research could prove more of a goal to get up and get moving than the usual New Year's resolution."

Last year, Race for Life Pretty Muddy took place for the first time at Weston Park. Katy said: "It has all the fun and camaraderie of our much loved 5k and 10k events but with added obstacles and, of course, mud."

Women who sign up for 5k and 10k events in January can benefit from a reduced fee of £10. To enter Race for Life visit raceforlife.org or call 0300 123 0770.

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12 Three comics and dinner at club for £20

Stourbridge Chronicle Thursday, January 14, 2016

A NIGHT of comedy featuring performers from the Black Country club circuit will come to Stourbridge next Friday.

Comedian Jonny Cole is headlining the show at Stourbridge Rugby Club on January 22.

Cole, from Wednesbury, has attracted a legion of fans with his hilarious songs and observations on life in the Black Country. He is performing at the club's Stourton Park base, in Bridgnorth Road, with London comic Philip Simon and Dudley comedian Wayne Beese, who hosts the monthly Fitz of Laughter Comedy Club at Katie Fitzgerald's.

A two-course meal is part of the £20 ticket price. Club president John Slim said: "We hosted a similar event last January which was a complete sell-out. Tickets are being snapped up for this one too."

For further information, or to book, email rugby@stourbridgerugby.com, call John Slim on 07989756913 or the club office on 01384 395000.

New jobs at safari park

AROUND 200 jobs are going to be created at West Midland Safari Park as the attraction launches its latest recruitment drive.

The park is looking to bring in extra people in preparation for its summer season. Around 50 of the vacancies are within the theme park. Food and drink sellers, shop workers and admissions staff are wanted.

It comes as the safari park is preparing to undergo an £80 million expansion. A water park, 250-bed hotel, conference centre and spa will be built as part of the overhaul. Bosses say the development will transform the site into one of the top UK attractions.

Applications can be made at www.wmssp.co.uk/careers

30,000 in drug crime arrests but the figures are falling

Woof justice call over dog walk ban

ANGRY dog owners have signed a petition against plans to ban the animals from parts of Himley Hall.

Council bosses want to cater more for picnicking families and have placed signs around the 18th century attraction on the Himley Road warning of the changes.

The 'dog free zones' will see pets prevented from using open spaces stretching between the Main Gate and West Gate. The plans will come into force in February.

John Share, from Sedgley, said he had been walking his golden retriever around Himley for 15 years. He said people leaving rubbish were causing the main problems and that dogs should be left alone.

"We found out from one of the wardens just before Christmas," he said. "We didn't hear anything for a while, but posters have now been put up around the park saying it will come into force next month."

"About a third of the park will be closed off and a lot of people are not happy about it."

Catherine Molineux, of Coseley, who owns a white German shepherd, said: "You would think that with all the talk of council cutbacks they would have better things to spend the money on than silly schemes like this. It will ruin a great location for so many considerate dog walkers and it has been done without people being consulted."

Derek White, from Russells Hall, who walks his shih tzu Mitzi, at Himley said he was one of many dog owners considering cancelling their £50 a



Thumbs down – owners unhappy at the ban on walking dogs in Himley Hall grounds year parking permits and going elsewhere.

"We just can't understand the council's reasoning behind this and also how they are going to marshal it," he said.

"A lot of disabled people use the park to exercise their dogs but they won't be able to let them off the lead."

Dudley councillor Khurshid Ahmed said the grounds of Himley Hall were

used by many people and needed to cater for a variety of users.

"As the spring months approach we are looking to encourage more people and families to enjoy picnics and other relaxing pursuits in these lovely grounds," he said.

"While dog walkers are free to exercise their pets in the vast majority of the open space, we are looking to provide a small pet-free area."

MORE than 30,000 arrests for drug possession, distribution and production have been made in the West Midlands since 2011.

The offences, ranging from cannabis possession to importing class A drugs, work out at 18 arrests a day between January 2011 and November 2015, according to a Freedom of Information request.

Of the total 34,223 offences which led to arrests, less than half, 15,612, have resulted in a person being charged.

The figures also reveal that the total of arrests relating to drug offences have reduced by a third since 2011, when 9,873 were made, to 2015 when 3,074 have been made.

The figures fell each year in between the two dates.

West Midlands Police Inspector Simon Inglis said the force had created various initiatives over the years to tackle drug crime.

Priority

He said: "Drug offences remain a key issue in many crimes and tackling the problem remains a priority."

"Recent operations such as Sandwell's Spring Safer Six prove this. The initiative – which was months in the planning – resulted in dozens of people being brought before courts. They are currently awaiting sentencing and the drugs seized have been destroyed."

"All our efforts to target drug dealers are balanced with work alongside drug support groups to get users the help they need to break the cycle of addiction."

The most frequent crime, possession of cannabis, saw 11,038 arrests made, however figures for that particular offence dropped from 3,440 in 2011 to 877 in 2015 – falling each year in between the two dates.

The number of arrests made for possessing cocaine, crack cocaine, heroin, LSD and MDMA also fell significantly.

Thousands of visitors at two mansions

TWO mansions near Wolverhampton have seen more than 115,000 visitors in the last year, new figures from the National Trust reveal.

Wightwick Manor House and Moseley Old Hall, both National Trust properties, have had tens of thousands of people pouring through the doors during 2015.

Wightwick Manor House, a Victorian mansion originally owned by Theodore Mander, saw 75,145 visitors. Meanwhile, Moseley Old Hall in Moseley Old Hall Lane, which is famous for a visit by King Charles II during his escape to France, welcomed 40,942 visitors.

Jo Armstrong from the National Trust, said: "We are delighted that visitor figures continue to rise year-on-year and at some places are record-breaking achievements."

Another popular attraction is the Birmingham Back to Backs, city centre homes literally built back-to-back around a communal courtyard in the 1840s.

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Police helicopter base is set to be scrapped

Sweethearts' diamond day



Diamond wedding celebrations for Fred and Brenda Bunce, from Penn, who were teenage sweethearts

A PAIR of teenage sweethearts have celebrated 60 years of marriage.

Fred and Brenda Bunce, of Penn, marked their diamond anniversary on New Year's Eve.

The couple, now aged 86 and 84 respectively, have two children Vivienne, 56, and Diana, 53.

They were both pupils at Broad Lanes Secondary School, Coseley and regularly attended the Mission Church of St Oswald and grew close before Fred joined the Royal Navy in 1947, where he served until 1959.

"We lived in fairly close proximity when we were young and were

in a group of teenagers that grew up together," said Fred. "During the period that I was in the Navy, we kept in contact but didn't get serious until I returned home from the Korean War in 1953."

Shortly after then, they got engaged and married on New Year's Eve 1955 at Christ Church, Coseley.

Fred worked in the business of designing and supplying electrical systems to be used for aircrafts and ships, starting out at Integral Limited, Birmingham New Road. Brenda was employed at Hopyard Foundries.

A POLICE helicopter base which serves three forces in the region will be scrapped this year in a bid to save money and ensure police air support is 'used properly'.

The National Police Air Service, which provides flight support to police forces across the country, recently confirmed it is closing 10 of its 25 bases from January 1.

It means the helicopter used to jointly serve Staffordshire Police, West Midlands Police and West Mercia Police will now be based in Birmingham instead of at Half-penny Green Airport, near Wolverhampton.

The nearest aircraft available will attend requests for assistance instead of individual forces owning and operating their own helicopter.

Police helicopters are normally called out to help police find missing people or help in the capture of suspects using thermal-imaging camera which detect body heat while crews direct officers on the ground.

Prioritise

But Staffordshire Police and Crime Commissioner Matthew Ellis said air support had sometimes been called in for seemingly innocuous incidents.

"I think there was an episode a while ago in the county when the chopper was pulled in to help find a missing pet which clearly is not the best use of a £1,500-an-hour resource," said Mr Ellis.

"I welcome the move to Birmingham because it means local forces will have to better prioritise and make sure air support is used properly and in the most efficient way."

He added that Staffordshire's 'more rural' areas might find police helicopter support may take a 'few minutes longer than normal' but urban areas would not 'feel any difference.'

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FIVE MINUTES FROM MERRY HILL

14 MP's support for a 1p cut in beer duty

Stourbridge Chronicle Thursday, January 14, 2016

WARLEY MP John Spellar has thrown his backing behind calls to the Chancellor for a further cut in beer duty in the next Budget.

Beer duty has been cut by 1p in the past three budgets.

A motion has now been put forward calling for the Chancellor George Osborne to extend this for the fourth year in succession.

Mr Spellar said: "I'm very pleased to join the call for a further cut in beer duty."

"Beer drinkers in the UK pay a much higher tax on each pint and a further cut will be a welcome boost to customers and pubs alike."

According to the motion in the House of Commons the three 1p cuts to beer duty have 'led to an additional 19,000 vital jobs'.

It urges the Government to 'sustain this momentum by considering a further cut in beer duty in the 2016 Budget which would secure pub jobs and help reduce the cost of living for hard-working people'.

Council pays out £650k for accidents involving its fleet of vehicles

CASH-STRAPPED Sandwell Council has paid out a staggering £653,000 in the past five years as a result of accidents involving its fleet of vehicles.

There were 744 crashes involving 447 council vehicles between September 1, 2010 and September 30, 2015.

These accidents saw the stump up a grand total of £653,909.21 for compensation, repairs or replacements from its internal coffers, a Freedom of Information request has revealed.

UKIP Councillor Philip Garrett called the spending 'a waste of money' but Sandwell Council leader Darren Cooper said the authority did not view the figure as 'disproportionately high', and was aiming to reduce the number of accidents.

Caparo engineering group collapsed with £160m debts

Masked robbers strike at Dunelm store

MASKED raiders armed with metal bars stormed a home furnishing store in Oldbury, threatening staff and escaping with cash.

The gang of four men struck at Dunelm, just off Birchley Island, shortly before the store closed and forced staff to hand over the day's takings.

The workers were ordered to sit down while a manager was led into an office to open the safe.

A customer was also thought to be in the building at the time.

A spokesman for the company described the staff as 'incredible', adding they were now being supported following the incident at around 8pm on Friday.

The store opened as usual the following morning.

Police are in the process of examining CCTV footage and forensic experts have also visited the premises, one of almost 150 Dunelm superstores across the country.

Shaken

West Midlands Police spokesman Billy Corrigan said: "Four masked men carrying bars forced staff to hand over the takings. The robbers then escaped in a dark coloured car."

"The workers were left badly shaken but were otherwise unharmed."

"CCTV footage has been secured and forensic experts have visited the shop. Other inquiries are also under way to catch those responsible."

A spokesman for the retail chain said: "Dunelm can confirm that a robbery took place at its store in Oldbury



The Dunelm store in Oldbury, where staff were threatened by masked men on Friday night. No-one was injured during the incident and we are supporting the individuals involved."

He added: "The store operated as usual over the weekend and we would like to say that our staff have been incredible."

"As this is a police matter, we can give no further comment at this time."

The spokesman would not reveal how much money was taken,

THE Caparo engineering group collapsed with more than £160 million of debt, it has been revealed.

The Black Country-based business called in administrators in October and its collapse saw the loss of some 500 jobs. Administrators from PwC were able to sell off some parts of the group in deals that saved more than 1,100 jobs, including 527 at Caparo Tubular Solutions in Bilston and Oldbury.

Documents filed by PwC at Companies House this week reveal the scale of the woes that dragged down Caparo Industries, founded in the late 1960s by Lord Paul. His son Angad, the 45-year-old chief executive of Caparo Industries, died in a fall from his eighth floor penthouse home in London three weeks after the collapse.

A statement of affairs filed by PwC shows total liabilities for the group of £163.7m, including £45.6m owned to the group pension fund. It also lists financial assets with a book value of around £50m that the administrators expect will release just £73,000.

Loans

PwC was called in to raise as much as possible to pay off creditors.

The sale of businesses will raise money for the creditors, as will the sale of equipment and stock from businesses that shut down, such as Caparo Atlas Fastenings in Darlaston, Caparo Precision Tubes at Oldbury and Caparo Forging Europe in Dudley.

There are also a string of loans between companies with the group.

A statement of administrators' proposals from PwC, filed with Birmingham High Court, reveal last ditch efforts to save the firm required further funding but agreement could not be reached with stakeholders.

Although the steel crisis hit the company, documents show this was made worse by Caparo's 'asset-based lending facility'. This meant it was borrowing money against its sales invoices before customers had paid.

Gardens to join forces with society

AN Edwardian house set within seven acres of botanic gardens will be working with the Royal Horticultural Society. Winterbourne House and Garden in Edgbaston has been named as an RHS Partner Garden.

Head gardener Steve Haines says it is a 'huge stamp of approval' for the horticultural team at Winterbourne. Partner Gardens support the charitable work of the RHS by offering members occasional free entry.

Mr Haines said: "The Royal Horticultural Society is not only the benchmark for garden standards, but plays a huge role in sharing the wonder of gardens with everyone, from garden lovers to scientists to families."

Winterbourne's seven acres of garden were largely designed under the watchful eye of Margaret Nettlefold, inspired by the arts and crafts work of Gertrude Jekyll. Both the house and garden have been restored. Winterbourne, on Edgbaston Park Road, will be offering free entry to RHS members every Monday to Wednesday.

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Robin has concert date for The Three Degrees

LEGENDARY American group The Three Degrees will perform in Bilston this spring

The soul group, with original members Helen Scott and Valerie Holiday alongside Freddie Pool, will sing at the Robin 2 at Mount Pleasant on March 19.

They are also performing at Theatre Severn in Shrewsbury on April 6.

The performances will be part of a 30-date tour around theatres and concert halls in England during March and April.

The band has just released its first studio album in 25 years, entitled Strategy.

The Three Degrees have been going for 50 years and are known for hits such as When Will I See You Again, Take Good Care of Yourself, Woman In Love and My Simple Heart.

They were once dubbed the favourite group of Prince Charles.

Helen Scott said they were looking forward to entertaining a new generation of fans.

She said: "We have never given up. It still amazes me when we see teenagers singing along with our songs. We still have fans who have grown up with us."



The Three Degrees are coming to the Black Country on tour and have released a new album after 25 years

Chance to try out your acting skills

BUDDING actors are invited to attend the free adult acting taster sessions run by Gazebo theatre company in Bilston.

The free sessions, at Bilston Town Hall are aimed at encouraging more adults to get involved in amateur dramatics in the area. People of all abilities and experience are invited to attend the classes today (Thursday) which run from 10.30am to 12.30 pm and 4.30 to 6.30pm. Each session is led by experienced professional actors who are to provide one-to-one support.

Gazebo theatre company, which is a registered charity and was launched in 1979, is one of Britain's leading educational theatre companies. The company run a range of programmes to help both groups and individuals of different ages build confidence in performing. To register for a free place visit www.bilstontownhall.co.uk or call 01902 497222.

'I love you' were last words to his mother

HE said 'I love you Mum'. I said 'you never tell me you love me' and he said 'I just did'. I said 'Happy New Year son, see you in the New Year'."

Those were the heartbreaking final words of Tracey Betts to her 15-year-old son Callan just hours before he died on New Year's Eve. Callan Fendall-Betts died from pneumonia less than a week after developing a cough.

The youngster, from Lower Gornal, had suffered a lung condition for six years and also had epilepsy but neither had a major effect on his day-to-day life.

His devastated parents describe him as a 'cheeky teenager who kept his sense of humour right to the end'.

The teenager had enjoyed Christmas before celebrating his first anniversary with his girlfriend two days later. He was looking forward to the future, having been accepted at Halesowen College.

Callan had a malformed left lung for six years and also lived with epilepsy. But the conditions were managed and did not overshadow his life. His lung condition meant he was more susceptible to illness and his body less able to fight infections.

Father Mark Fendall said: "He was always active. He would do everything all the other kids did, running around and playing football in the garden.

"To look at him you wouldn't think there was anything wrong, he was just an ordinary lad."

Miss Betts added: "He was on antibiotics to make sure he didn't get colds or chest infections. He had regular check-ups. A cold for him could hang around. But it was not something we thought would limit his life in any way."

Callan was in his final year at school and looking forward to starting at Halesowen College in September.

His ambition was to teach music, which his parents said was his love. He was a talented keyboard player. He was also said to be 'to-



Callan Fendall-Betts

tally smitten' with girlfriend Lizzie, who was in his year at school.

Mr Fendall said: "He was a joker. He took after me with his sense of humour, it was wicked and a bit naughty."

Miss Betts said: "He was silly, funny, happy, loving. If you could dream about a child and pick all things for it to have, he had them."

It was only recently that Callan showed off his musical talent, at the Halesowen College open evening at Himley Hall where he played keyboard.

Miss Betts said: "He had never played publicly, he was always a bit embarrassed about it. That was the only time he ever played. That for us was a lovely thing to see. That was his love - music."

Teachers and pupils at Ellowes Hall Sports College wore blue ribbons in tribute at an assembly in his memory.

The funeral will be held on January 20 but the location was still to be confirmed as The Chronicle went to Press.

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War art at gallery

AN exhibition combining art and the First World War can be viewed by art lovers until the end of the month.

War Horse Illustrations will be on display at Dudley Museum and Art Gallery until January 30.

The exhibition by Dudley artist Glen Brookes will take place in the community gallery. The exhibit runs from 10am to 4pm at the St James' Road venue.

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Riviera Travel has been carefully researching and thoughtfully crafting an enticing range of holidays and breaks for more than 30 years. Here is just a small selection of their Italian breaks which include all excursions as described, a choice of hotels on a half-board basis and return flights.

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On this holiday the choice of hotels are offered in and around the town of Sorrento and excursions include a boat trip to the beautiful island of Capri, home to the famous Blue Grotto; the city of Pompeii, whose state of preservation is astonishing; a visit to the still-active volcano of Vesuvius, and a visit to Naples, home to the Archaeological Museum that houses some of the finest finds from the nearby excavations.

The Amalfi coastline offers stunning views and a full day is spent driving the meandering roads, admiring the exclusive resort of Positano, the picturesque village of Amalfi and then Ravello, perched in its breathtaking location boasting delightful small cafes and the Villa Rufolo, a charming collection of medieval buildings.



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A full day is spent at Bergamo with a guided tour, whilst at Lake Maggiore there is chance to enjoy some free time in its most attractive town, Stresa.

Travelling back to Switzerland, Lugano is an eclectic mix of traditional Swiss values and the more laid-back Latin influences from across the border. Explore the cafe-lined main square, the myriad of twisting lanes of the old town or discover the dense network of shops.

Lake Garda, Venice and Verona

Eight days from £619

Lake Garda is an area of outstanding natural beauty and on this holiday there is a selection of hotels to choose from in either Malcesine or Riva del Garda, both of which are beautifully surrounded by lofty peaks and situated at the more scenic north end of the lake.

Tour around the lake, passing through some typically Italian villages complete with tiny harbours and snow-capped mountains. Whilst a tour to the Dolomite Mountains gives the opportunity to experience the spectacular alpine scenery.

Venice is unique and caught in a time warp. Culturally rich as any city can be, see many of the countless places of interest on a guided tour, including St Mark's Square and its Basilica, the Campanile and Doge's Palace — home to the most powerful man in Venice. A trip on a gondola is also a must in this stunning and fascinating city (payable locally).

Discover the hidden gems of medieval Verona, on a guided walking tour, then explore the typical Italian shops and market place here, or maybe enjoy the violinists serenading customers at the numerous pavement cafes.



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Students shocked as school could face closure

THE future of a secondary school in Dudley has been thrown into doubt after council bosses launched a consultation into possible closure.

The Coseley School, which has 528 pupils, could shut following discussions with parents, pupils, staff and unions. Shocked pupils were warned for the first time during a school assembly on Friday afternoon. Parents were later sent text messages advising them to read a statement on the school website.

Headteacher Kirsty Westhead-Jones said: "A number of options are being looked into for the school. However, parents, pupils, staff and the wider community will have the opportunity to give their views before any final decision is made."

Inspection

"The education and support of our pupils remains our top priority and we will continue to work with parents and families."

The school, at Henne Drive, off Ivyhouse Lane, Coseley, was told it 'requires improvement' following an Ofsted inspection in March 2014. But inspectors noted improvements were being

By James Fisher

made during a follow-up visit three months later.

Mrs Westhead-Jones, in a statement on the school's website, said she was informed of the council's decision on Wednesday afternoon to 'consult on a closure of The Coseley School'.

The statement added: "I thank you in advance for your understanding and support and wish to state that at this time no final decision has been made about the future of the school."

Councillor Ian Cooper, cabinet member for children's services at Dudley, said: "We are unable to go into the detail of the proposals until we have fully discussed them with parents, staff and unions. This process is likely to start this month."

Alexandra returns to star in Sister Act



Singer and actress Alexandra Burke pictured when she starred in *The Bodyguard* in London's West End

ALEXANDRA Burke will be starring in a musical at her namesake theatre in Birmingham.

The X Factor winner, who went on to star in *The Bodyguard* in the West End and on tour, will play Deloris Van Cartier, a nightclub singer on the run from gangsters who hides out in a convent in *Sister Act*.

The hit musical, which was also a movie starring Whoopi Goldberg and Maggie Smith, will be at Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre from September 12 to 17 in an all-new production from Leicester's Curve Theatre.

It is being directed and choreographed by Strictly Come Dancing judge Craig Revel Horwood.

Alexandra Burke, who was seen in the West Midlands in *The Bodyguard* at Birmingham Hippodrome last summer, will star as the sassy soul-singing addition to the nuns' choir in the comedy musical. It will have a run in the East Midlands this summer before going on tour.

See www.sisteractuktour.co.uk or www.atgtickets.com/venues/new-alexandra-theatre-birmingham for tickets.

Sir Jack to get a statue and his museum wish

SIR Jack Hayward's dying wish to have a museum built in his adopted home of Grand Bahama is set to become a reality.

Work has started to revamp a site owned by the former Wolves owner.

And a statue of Sir Jack will be built overlooking his beloved Molineux, it has been announced a year on from his death.

It will stand at the top of Molineux Street, near to the old Wanderer pub by the exit of the subway from the city centre.

A design for the statue has not yet been finalised and it will likely take at least a year to complete, with Wolves keen to take their time on making the statue as fitting a tribute as possible to the great man.

Renowned sculptor James Butler, who created the Billy Wright and Stan Cullis statues at Molineux, has been commissioned to create it.

He knew Sir Jack personally and is working on draft drawings for final approval by Sir Jack's family and Wolves.

Dignitaries and entrepreneurs and tasked them with building Grand Bahama's first major museum. He donated the site — a 5,000 sq ft plot of land at the Shannon Country Club in Freepoint — as well as funding for the project.

Important

Now, with the first anniversary of Sir Jack's death this week, workers have moved on to the land to start work on the Museum of Grand Bahama, which sits at the entrance to the stunning nature park the Garden of the Groves.

Wolverhampton-born Sir Jack died at the age of 91 on January 13 last year.

Janet Albury, committee member of the Museum of Grand Bahama, said: "The museum is extremely important, not just to the people of Grand



Sir Jack at his office in 2006



Inside of the Shannon Country Club



Outside the museum are construction and committee representatives

Bahama but for all of those who have lived and worked here from the early pioneer days.

"Sir Jack is a massive factor in the development of the island, and it was his wish for a museum that could tell the story of Freepoint and the people associated with it."

Sir Jack was one of the pioneers who set up Freepoint, a vast free trade

zone and city, having arrived in Grand Bahama in 1956 to continue the work started by his father, Sir Charles Hayward.

He became vice-president of the Grand Bahama Port Authority (GBPA) and spent decades promoting Freepoint, which contains the island's commercial ship harbour and main airport.

£4k cost of open space impressions is criticised

DUDLEY Council has come under fire for spending £4,000 on impressions of how Castle Hill will look if the Hippodrome is bulldozed.

Ukip Councillor Dean Perks said he was astonished the authority had splashed the cash on the images, given it has not carried out any costings for the plan.

It has emerged sketches of the expense of open space which would replace the Hippodrome cost the cash-strapped authority £4,000.

However, cabinet member Councillor Khurshid Ahmed said it was vital to have quality designs before any decisions should be made.

An eleventh-hour rescue bid to save the landmark venue has been launched but demolition still appears the most likely option.

Councillor Perks said: "I am astonished given Dudley Council's financial situation to find out the artist's impression cost the authority £4,000.

"Another example of mismanagement? It appears so considering no costings for the demolition and open space have been done.

"Would it have not been prudent and beneficial to the students to ask Dudley College if they could have done it? I'm sure there are talented students that would have benefited from a real work-like project."

Dudley Council wants to demolish the Hippodrome and replace it with a public space. Council officials confirmed £4,000 had been spent on the artist's impressions.

Councillor Ahmed said: "In order for cabinet to be able to properly visualise the replacement scheme in their decision making it was vital to have quality designs."



Artists' impressions of how the public open space around Castle Hill will look without the Hippodrome

Health advice given at forum meetings

PEOPLE will be able to get top health tips at the next round of the community forums in Dudley.

Health and social care professionals will be speaking to residents at all of the 10 public meetings which run from January 25 to February 3.

They will be giving advice on keeping well over the winter months as well as talking about community health care services which people can access to avoid a stay in hospital.

Councillor Pete Lowe, leader of the council, said: "People will be able to discuss issues in their communities with councillors who are only too happy to help."

The forums give people the opportunity to raise issues or concerns in their communities as well as discuss ideas for improvements.

The latest round begins on January 25 with Coseley East and Sedgley community forum, which takes place at Age Concern Sedgley, Ettymore Road. On the same night Gornal, Upper Gornal and Woodseton community forum, will be at Lower Gornal Royal British Legion, Ruiton Street, Dudley. All the forums start at 6.30pm.

Burial fees will rise as council need more funds

BURIAL fees in Dudley will rise as part of a series of increased charges being introduced by the cash-strapped council.

The increase will be brought in as Dudley Council continues its battle to meet savings of £20 million over the next three years.

Among the fees to rise are the cost of exclusive right of burial on a plot, which will rise from £1,935 to £2,090.

Cremation costs will also rise, from £344 to £372.

New fees will also come into force for a range of leisure centre and museum services.

Dudley Council officials, in a report, said every effort has been made to minimise the rise in pricing, and some fees have remained the same.

A report to Councillor Khurshid Ahmed said: "Increases are proposed to account for inflationary increases and pressures that individual services face, and are calculated at a level required to meet income targets set as part of the council's budget."

Inflation

"Specific services include amounts within their fees and charges, as they have in previous years, which allow for reinvestment in those services.

"Any increases are in line with inflation and every effort has been made to minimise increases and in some instances to hold prices at current levels."

Council chiefs said they had invested in bereavement services and facilities.

These include a £1.1 million upgrade of cremation facilities at Gornal Wood Crematorium, while future upgrades of the cremation facilities at Stourbridge Crematorium are planned.

Fees for hiring rooms at council venues have also been increased.

Parking fees at Himley Park will rise with the cost of two hours parking going up by 20p from £1.20 to £1.40. The cost of some museum activities will rise although admission will remain free. These include some sessions at the Red House Glass Cone.

Dudley UKIP group leader, Councillor Paul Brothwood, urged the council to look again at fees.

"I appreciate that the council needs to raise revenue but the council could look at other ways rather than putting up fees, like cutting the fat from the council — stopping employing workers on high daily rates, reducing the directors and reducing the use of agency staff," he said.

The council has trimmed £1 million through a senior management restructure.

By Andrew Turton

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Tribute shows to legends of music

TWO major tribute shows are coming to the region tonight (Thursday).

The Simon & Garfunkel Story at the Robin 2 in Bilston is a tribute to the world's most successful musical duo, New Yorkers Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel.

Expect classics such as Mrs Robinson, The Boxer and Bridge Over Troubled Water in a show that recreates the 1981 Central Park reunion concert.

The show is also being staged at Stafford Gatehouse Theatre on February 13, Redditch Palace Theatre on April 1 and Solihull Arts Complex on April 6.

Meanwhile, the Johnny Cash Roadshow, with Clive John as the Man in Black, is at Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre. It is a celebration of the country music legend's life and music.

There will be duets with Jill Schoonjan as June Carter, the singer's partner on and off stage.

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£200k zoo revamp to bring animals closer



Big plans – Dudley Zoo's director Derek Grove by the flamingo enclosure which is set for a total revamp

THREE enclosures at Dudley Zoo are in line for a revamp costing £200,000 to bring visitors even closer to the animals.

Bosses at the Castle Hill attraction have revealed details of major work to develop homes for its breeding group of gelada baboons and the family of flamingos.

While the third project is to create an interactive walk-through exhibit where visitors can feed dozens of yellow-backed chattering lorikeets, birds which are vulnerable in the wild.

Zoo director Derek Grove said it was part of an on-going programme of renovation work to the animal enclosures aimed at giving the creatures more space.

"The improvements to these three enclosures are the next stage of our site development plan and will benefit both our animals and our visitors," he said.

Experience

"The plans focus on the bottom part of our 40-acre site and will provide additional animals and facilities, from the moment visitors step through the gate."

The largest part of the project is the £120,000 work on the flamingo enclosure which will see a much bigger pool and a larger indoor area with a viewing area.

The £40,000 scheme to extend the baboon enclosure includes transforming a former shop building into a viewing area. The paddock, which is next to the zoo's vintage chairlift, will also be extended up the bank to provide more grazing area.

Plans to replace the Monkey Tails walk-through exhibit with the lorikeet experience are estimated to cost £40,000.

Shining a spot-Light on micro-sized Noddy



Micro sculptor Willard Wigan he uses the eye of a needle for his tiny sculptures

THE Light House in Wolverhampton is planning a special celebration for its silver screen year – including a mini Noddy Holder and a world famous sculptor.

The media centre, which shows a variety of films and plays, turns 30 this year and is also celebrating 25 years of being in its home in the Chubb Buildings.

To mark the milestone, the centre is hosting a major exhibition from world famous sculptor and Wolverhampton

local Willard Wigan. Mr Wigan MBE, from Ashmore Park Estate in Wednesfield, makes microscopic art, with his sculptures usually placed in the eye of a needle or on the head of a pin.

His exhibition will feature a micro-sculpture of Noddy Holder as the centre piece and will run from March 13-May 2. Noddy himself will be in attendance to unveil his sculpture.

The Light House is also hosting a VIP and corporate day, a series of 25 year-anniversary film screenings and a host of events set to be announced.

Also for 2016, the centre's jazz and comedy nights are returning.



Noddy Holder to feature

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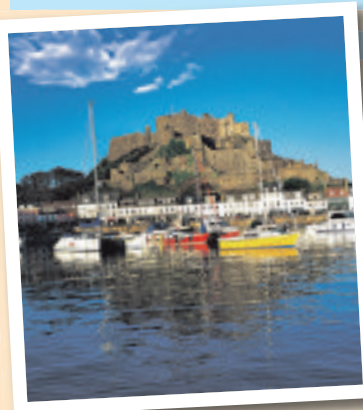
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Two days departing April 3



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Royal Yacht Britannia, Edinburgh and Glasgow

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Visit www.therobin.co.uk

An Evening With Chris Hadfield



Tuesday, 8pm
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Visit www.thsh.co.uk

Daughter



Wednesday, 7.30pm
The Institute, B'ham

London-based trio Elena Tonra, Igor Haefeli and Remi Agusella released their debut album If You Leave three years ago and are now back with new album Not To Disappear.
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Friday, 7.30pm
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Think Floyd: Pink Floyd Tribute

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Lichfield Garrick, WS13 6HR.
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Sat at 7pm,
The RoadHouse Birmingham,
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Aiden
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The Rainbow, Birmingham,
B12 0LD.
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The RoadHouse Birmingham,
Kings Norton, B30 3DZ.
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The Institute, Digbeth,
Birmingham, B5 6DY.
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The Rainbow, Birmingham,
B12 0LD. Call 0121 753 1818

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The Knights Quest,
Rowley Regis, B65 0EE.
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Mood Indigo: Frank Sinatra Tribute
Thu at 9.30pm,
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B31QU. Call 0121 200 3030

Victories At Sea
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Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath,
Birmingham, B14 7JZ.
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B1 1DB. Call 0121 622 8250

The Modfathers: Paul Weller Tribute

Sat at 7.30pm,
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Lee Memphis King: One Night Of Elvis

Sat at 7.30pm,
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Birmingham, B5 4DS.
Call 0844 871 3011

Turnover

Sun at 7pm - 11pm,
The Rainbow, Birmingham,
B12 0LD. Call 0121 753 1818

The Corrs

Tue at 7pm, £30.20 - £45.70
Genting Arena,
Birmingham, B40 1NT.
Call 0121 780 4141

Matthew Espinosa
Fri at 6pm - 9.30pm, £18
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Birmingham, B5 6DY.
Call 0121 643 0428

Open Mic Night
Mon at 8.30pm, Free
Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge,
DY8 3TB. Call 01384 374410

Jamie Lawson
Fri at 6pm - 10pm,
The Institute, Digbeth,
Birmingham, B5 6DY.
Call 0121 643 0428

JAZZ & SOUL

The Big Wolf Band
Wed at 9pm,
The Jam House, Birmingham,
B31QU. Call 0121 200 3030

The Subterraneans
Fri at 9pm, Sat at 9pm, £5
The Jam House, Birmingham,
B31QU. Call 0121 200 3030

Delano Mills And Not Strictly Jazz
Tue at 8.30pm,
The Jam House, Birmingham,
B31QU. Call 0121 200 3030

Tom Dunnett
Fri at 5pm,
Symphony Hall, Birmingham,
B1 2EA. Call 0121 780 3333

FOLK & ACOUSTIC

The Pitmen Poets
Wed at 7.30pm,
Stafford Gatehouse Theatre,
ST16 2LT. Call 01785 254653

Acoustic Showcase
Thu at 7pm,
The RoadHouse Birmingham,
Kings Norton, B30 3DZ.
Call 0121 246 2273

Irish Music Session

Wed at 8pm,
Katie Fitzgerald's,
Stourbridge, DY8 3TB.
Call 01384 374410

CLASSICAL & OTHER MUSIC

CBSO Centre Stage: Verdi And Puccini

Fri at 1.10pm,
Symphony Hall, Birmingham,
B1 2EA. Call 0121 780 3333

New English Orchestra And Singers 40th Birthday Celebration Concert

Sat at 7.30pm,
Birmingham Town Hall,
B3 3DQ. Call 0121 780 3333

Britten's A Ceremony Of Carols

Fri at 7.45pm,
Birmingham Cathedral,
B3 2QB. Call 0121 262 1840

Black Dyke Band

Sun at 2.30pm,
Symphony Hall,
Birmingham, B1 2EA.
Call 0121 780 3333

Serenade To Music

Thu at 7.30pm, £12.50 - £45
Symphony Hall, Birmingham,
B1 2EA. Call 0121 780 3333

KS3 Schools' Concerts

Tue at 11.30am, 1.30pm, £5
Symphony Hall, Birmingham,
B1 2EA. Call 0121 780 3333

Scheherazade

Sat at 3pm, £12.50 - £43
Symphony Hall, Birmingham,
B1 2EA. Call 0121 780 3333

THEATRE

Eight+8

Wed at 7.30pm,
mac, Cannon Hill Road,
Birmingham, B12 9QH.
Call 0121 446 3232

The Snow Queen

Thu at 7.30pm, £12 - £17
Prince Of Wales Centre,
Cannock, WS11 1DE.
Call 01543 578762

Back To Bacharach

Thu at 7.30pm,
New Alexandra Theatre,
Birmingham,
B5 4DS. Call 0844 871 3011

Death Of A Salesman

Sat at 7.45pm, Sun at 2.45pm,
Thu at 7.45pm,
The Crescent Theatre,
Birmingham,
B16 6AE. Call 0121 643 5858

Crazy Glue

Thu at 8pm,
mac, Cannon Hill Road,
Birmingham, B12 9QH.
Call 0121 446 3232

Abuelo

Fri at 8pm - 10.20pm, Sat at 8pm - 10.20pm,
Birmingham Repertory Theatre,
B1 2EP. Call 0121 236 4455

Snow Child: Tutti Frutti

Sun at 11am, 2.30pm,
mac, Cannon Hill Road,
Birmingham, B12 9QH.
Call 0121 446 3232

Lady Lust

Thu at 8pm - 10pm,
Birmingham Repertory Theatre,
B1 2EP. Call 0121 236 4455

Beyond The Barricade

Fri at 7.30pm,
£19.50 - £21.50
New Alexandra Theatre,
Birmingham, B5 4DS.
Call 0844 871 3011

The Lion The Witch And The Wardrobe

Fri at 10.15am, 2.30pm, Sat at 7pm, £7.50 - £35
Birmingham Repertory Theatre,
B1 2EP.
Call 0121 236 4455

Last Night A DJ Saved My Life - CANCELLED

Sat at 7.30pm, £17 - £54.14
Barclaycard Arena,
B1 2AA. Call 0121 780 4141

Peter Pan

Fri at 2.30pm, 7.15pm, Sat at 2.30pm, 7.15pm, Sun at 2pm, 6pm, Tue at 2.30pm, 7.15pm, Wed at 2.30pm, 7.15pm, Thu at 7.15pm, £17 - £31.50
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre,
WV1 1DE. Call 01902 573320

Birmingham Repertory Theatre: The Snowman

Wed at 2pm, 7pm, Thu at 10.30am, 2pm, £13.50 - £35
Birmingham Repertory Theatre,
B1 2EP. Call 0121 236 4455

Aladdin

Fri at 1pm, 7.15pm, Sat at 2.30pm, 7.15pm, Sun at 1pm, 5.15pm, Tue at 7.15pm, Wed at 2pm, 7.15pm, Thu at 2pm, 7.15pm, £14 - £42
Birmingham Hippodrome,
B5 4TB. Call 0844 338 5000

COMEDY

Stephen K Amos: The Laughter Master

Sat at 8pm - 10pm,
The Old Rep Theatre,
Birmingham,
B5 4DY. Call 0121 605 5116

Comedy Carousel

Thu at 7.30pm,
The Glee Club, Birmingham,
B5 4TD. Call 0871 472 0400

The Best In Live Stand-Up Comedy

Fri, Sat at 7pm,
The Glee Club, Birmingham,
B5 4TD. Call 0871 472 0400

Jim Davidson: Charlton Nil

Mon at 7.30pm,
£23.50 - £26.40
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre,
WV1 1DE.
Call 01902 573320

Kevin Hart: What Now?

Fri at 8pm,
Barclaycard Arena,
Birmingham, B1 2AA.
Call 0121 780 4141

Knightmare Live: Level 2

Fri at 8pm,
mac, Cannon Hill Road,
Birmingham, B12 9QH.
Call 0121 446 3232

Andrew Lawrence: Uncensored

Sat at 7pm,
Wolverhampton Slade Rooms,
WV1 1RQ.
Call 0870 320 7000

TALKS

An Evening With Chris Hadfield

Tue at 8pm - 10.30pm,
Symphony Hall,
Birmingham, B1 2EA.
Call 0121 780 3333

Henry Rollins: Charming Obsolete Tour 2016

Fri at 7.30pm,
Birmingham Town Hall,
B3 3DQ. Call 0121 780 3333

OTHER EVENTS

Autosport International

Fri - Sun at 9am - 6pm,
The NEC Birmingham,
B40 1NT. Call 0121 780 4141

Trophex 2016

Sun at 10am - 4.30pm, Mon at 10am - 4pm,
The NEC Birmingham,
B40 1NT. Call 0121 780 4141

Performance Car Show

Fri - Sun at 9am - 6pm,
The NEC Birmingham,
B40 1NT. Call 0121 780 4141

CLUBBING

Propaganda

Fri - Sat at 10.30pm - 3.30am, £3
O2 Academy Birmingham,
B1 1DB. Call 0121 622 8250

Relapse - Balearic And UK Sounds Of Tech/Bass House At Hare And Hounds

Sat - Sun at 9pm - 2am,
Hare & Hounds,
Kings Heath, Birmingham,
B41 7JZ. Call 0844 870 0000

MC Nutcracks Spectre Birthday Ball

Sat - Sun at 10pm - 6am,
The Institute, Digbeth,
Birmingham, B5 6DY.
Call 0121 643 0428

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Check out full listings in **the ticket** in Friday's Express & Star

Come back after ten years? Corrs we can

AFTER a decade away, The Corrs have returned with a new album and tour, including a concert at Genting Arena, Birmingham, on Tuesday.

Between 1995, when The Corrs released their debut offering *Forgiven, Not Forgotten*, and 2005 when their fifth album *Home* was launched, the band saw album sales of more than 40 million.

Then, the soft rock family band from Dundalk, took a ten year break for solo projects. Now Jim, Sharon, Caroline and Andrea are back together with a new album, *White Light*, which entered the UK charts at No 11.

The siblings have been busy promoting the record over recent months. Youngest Corr and singer, Andrea, has noticed the change of pace.

Babies

"Where am I?" That's something I ask myself every day now," says the 41-year-old. "What am I doing here and where are my babies?"

Since the hiatus, Andrea's had two children — three-year-old Jean and Brett Jr who's just turned one — with husband Brett Desmond, who she married in 2009.

She says the band's reunion is only a recent plan, from January 2015, when Caroline suggested they try to write some new music.

"We all missed being in the band. We had gone off the radar, and there was no record company involvement or anything like that. No one knew we were going to make a comeback. But if one of us had reservations, we



The Corrs are making a triumphant return Picture by K Westenberg

wouldn't be here either. It's all four of us, or none at all."

After a couple of days in the studio, they had more than enough ideas. "And that's the only reason we're here," adds Andrea.

"If the music was no good, I wouldn't be back. We're so excited

about it, and playing together after 10 years not doing so."

By September, the quartet were on stage in front of 60,000 people at BBC Radio 2 Live in London's Hyde Park.

It will be worth turning up early to catch support group, rising star British country music duo The Shires.

Snow body does it better

CREATED by Birmingham Repertory Theatre 22 years ago, *The Snowman* has been delighting young and old alike for over two decades with its wonderful mix of storytelling, spectacle and magic.

Now, it returns to Birmingham Rep following a successful 18th festive year in London's West End.

Based on Raymond Briggs' book *The Snowman* and featuring Howard Blake's much-loved score, The Rep's production has been seen by over half a million people since it first came to the stage.

The enchanting show tells the story of a young boy's adventures when his snowman comes miraculously to life on Christmas Eve. Featuring a dazzling array of colourful characters, including dancing penguins, magical reindeer, a beautiful snow princess, and, of course, Father Christmas himself, *The Snowman* is a treat for all the family.

The Snowman first appeared as a beautifully illustrated picture book by Raymond Briggs in 1978. It has since inspired the classic Oscar-nominated, Bafta award-winning animated film, first broadcast by Channel 4 on Christmas Eve of 1982.

The magical stage production features Howard Blake's timeless musical score played by a live orchestra, and includes the signature song *Walking in the Air*.

The Snowman is the perfect introduction to theatre for the very young and is at the Centenary Square theatre from Wednesday (January 20) to January 24. *The Snowman* is directed by Bill Alexander and choreographed by Robert North with set and costume designs by Ruari Murchison.

Black Dyke bring the best of brass

THE world's most famous brass band comes to Birmingham for an afternoon concert on Sunday.

With 160 years of rich musical history, Yorkshire's Black Dyke Band is proud of its heritage but also looks to the future. Last year in Germany the Queensbury-based band represented England and won the European Brass Band Championships for the thirteenth time. Black Dyke Band is the most recorded brass band in the world with over 350 recordings and most successful contesting band having won the British Open 30 times and the National Championships of Great Britain 23 times.

The concert is at 2.30pm at the Symphony Hall.

Comedians make it a funny start to year

TOP American comic and actor Kevin Hart, who starred in *Get Hard* opposite Will Ferrell and in *Grudge Match* with Robert De Niro and Sylvester Stallone, brings his *What Now? Tour* to the Barclaycard Arena tomorrow (Fri).

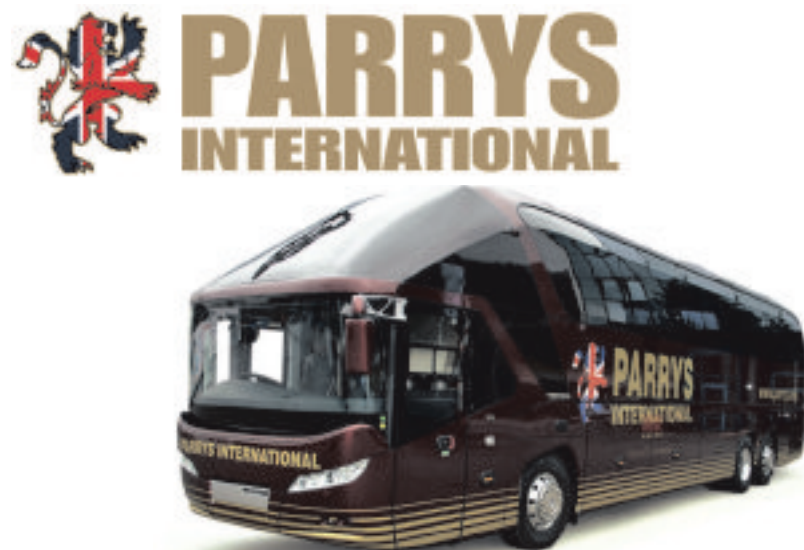
Andrew Lawrence, who recently had a Radio 4 sitcom, *There Is No Escape*, is at The Slade Rooms in Wolverhampton on Saturday, the same night Stephen K Amos plays *The Old Rep*, next to New Street Station in Birmingham. Expect politically incorrect humour when Jim Davidson brings his *Charlton Nil* show to Wolverhampton Grand Theatre on Monday.

Magical music is a classical treat

ONE of classical music's most popular pieces will be brought to life when conductor Andrew Gourlay leads the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra through Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade*.

The matinee performances will take place today (Thu) at 2.15pm and again on Saturday at 3pm.

Gourlay will conduct pianist Alexander Romanovsky and the CBSO at Birmingham's Symphony Hall. The programme will also feature Ravel's own little book of musical fairytales, *The Mother Goose Suite*, and Rachmaninov's jazziest concerto, *Piano Concerto No 4*.



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Crime Museum Uncovered Exhibition



Take a glimpse into some of history's most notorious crimes on this unusual two-day break.

For over 140 years the Metropolitan Police have seized items linked to criminal cases, forming a collection that was previously only accessible to police professionals and their guests.

Now, for the first time in history, some of these never-before-seen artefacts will go on public display at the museum of London.

From Jack the Ripper and the Great Train Robbery, to the Millennium Dome diamond heist and the Glasgow airport terrorist attack, *Crime Scene Uncovered* reveals the human stories behind the actions, and gives an insight into how such crimes were solved along with the advances in detection and criminal justice.

Among the many items on display, highlights include: memoirs of Donald Swanson, the senior officer on the Jack the Ripper investigation in the late 1800s; masks used by the Stratton brothers, the first criminals to be convicted based on fingerprint evidence; personal possessions of Ronnie Biggs, the Kray twins and other criminals, plus early counterfeiting and forgery implements.

The break also includes a visit to the Household Cavalry Museum, located in Horse Guards, for a behind-the-scenes look at the work that goes into the ceremonial and armoured reconnaissance role of The Queen's mounted bodyguard.

FROM £119

Two days departing March 5

PRICE INCLUDES:

- Return coach travel
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- Entrance to the Household Cavalry Museum
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The beach at Santander, northern Spain's city by the sea



Enjoy a delicious seafood dinner beside the harbour in beautiful Honfleur



A street market in the bustling Norman city of Caen

Relax and make the ferry journey part of your holiday experience

BRITTANY Ferries is riding a wave of success after announcing its most successful year in more than a decade.

More passengers are using Brittany Ferries as the gateway to western France and northern Spain, and the company is also becoming a major one-stop holiday provider. The 20 per cent discount on holidays booked before February 9 and a modest deposit of £40 per person is proving popular with families, especially as they can further spread the cost with the balance payable six weeks before departure.

Holidays in France, Spain and Portugal range from hotels and campsites to self-catering gites, cottages, paradors, apartments and villas.

Departures from Portsmouth, Poole and Plymouth, as opposed to negotiating the

By Leon Burakowski

chock-a-block M25-M20 to Dover, and the lure of often empty roads in Normandy and Brittany, instead of Calais and its problems, have won over families keen to avoid stress.

The holiday starts once aboard the cruise ferries with day and evening cabins available, or comfortable reserved seats, to ensure a relaxing experience — plus live entertainment, cinemas, shops, fine French dining or self-service restaurants.

Or from May to September there is a high speed service with the catamaran Normandie Express getting from Portsmouth to Cherbourg in as little as three hours.

Don't rush to your resort as soon as you reach the port because these coastal towns and cities are worth exploring, maybe on a short break or as a touring base. Favourites include Caen, a short distance from the

ferry port at Ouistreham, which is dominated by William the Conqueror's huge castle and has the lively buzz of a university city. It is also only a short distance from here to Bayeux with its museum based around the famous tapestry.

Le Havre was rebuilt after the destruction of the Second World War and is now a World Heritage site, a Maritime Metropolis famed for its 1950s architecture. Reached from Portsmouth via the 'Economie' service, this gateway to the Alabaster Coast is just a short drive — via the breathtaking Normandy Bridge over the Seine — to the picturesque harbour town of Honfleur, famous for art and seafood.

If food is high on the agenda, there is a quite amazing range of restaurants in the walled port city of Saint Malo in Brittany. The former haunt of infamous pirates is the place to sample the famous Breton crepes

and cider, and it also has lots of chic shops. Not far from Saint Malo is the magnificent and mystical Mont Saint Michel, another Unesco World Heritage site. The 24 to 32 hour services to Spain from Portsmouth link the UK with the bustling Basque city of Bilbao famed for the Frank Gehry-designed Guggenheim Museum Bilbao and the beach city of Santander.

Brittany Ferries operates routes to five destinations in Normandy and Brittany. Book online at www.brittanyferries.com or call 0330 159 7000. Brittany Ferries also has money-saving sail-and-stay offers — visit www.brittanyferries.com/offers. Brittany Ferries offers up to seven weekly return crossings from Portsmouth or Plymouth to Spain. Visit www.brittanyferries.com/holidays or call 0330 159 4700.

Pictures courtesy of www.calvados-tourisme.com and Brittany Ferries.

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CHOICE



The Getaway Car (BBC1, 6.50pm)
Dermot O'Leary takes five pairs of contestants to the South African countryside, where he puts their nerves, driving and communication skills – and their relationships – to the test in a series of high-octane car-based challenges. The most successful duo receive a chance to pit their talents behind the wheel against those of Top Gear's resident stunt-driver the Stig. Should they triumph, the winners will claim a £10,000 cash prize and the title of Getaway Champions. The contest gets under way as firefighter Matt and his wife Nicola, studio recording duo Sas and Grant, railway workers Wayne and Illy, long-term couple Vicki and Lindsey and newly engaged pair Manuella and Jamie take a spin on the show's circuit.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** James Martin: Home Comforts. **12.00** BBC News: Weather. **12.10** Football Focus. **12.50** Saturday Sportsday. **1.00** Live Snooker: The Masters. The opening semi-final from Alexandra Palace, London. **4.30** Final Score. **5.10** Now You See It. **5.40** BBC News. **5.50** Regional Programme. **6.00** **Pointless Celebrities.** Lizzie Webb, Chris Steele, Robin Cousins, Rosemary Conley, Iwan Thomas, Katharine Merry, Dr Dawn Harper and Dr Piers McKenna compete in a "health and fitness" edition of the quiz. **6.50** **The Getaway Car.** New series. Five pairs of contestants head to South Africa to test their nerves, driving and communication skills in a series of car-based challenges. Presented by Dermot O'Leary. **7.45** **The Voice UK.** The BBC's flagship singing contest continues as Paloma Faith, Boy George, William and Ricky Wilson preside over the second of seven "blind auditions", in which they must select their teams by assessing contestants' vocal abilities alone. This time, the coaches hear from professional cage fighter Chase Morton, who sings on his way to bouts, and violinist-turned-vocalist Charley Blue. Plus, drag queen Divina DeCampo displays a unique voice and Liverpoolian Stevie Calrow shows off the talents that once gave him a chance to sing with the Beatles. **9.05** **Casualty.** Ethan desperately searches a stretched-to-capacity ED for a bed to accommodate a critically ill elderly woman, and a young couple's plans to go travelling are halted by a car crash. **9.55** **The National Lottery Live.** Gaby Roslin presents as the all-important winning numbers are revealed. **10.05** **BBC News:** Weather. **10.25** **Match of the Day.** Gary Lineker presents highlights of the latest Premier League matches, including Manchester City v Crystal Palace at the Elland Stadium and Chelsea v Everton at Stamford Bridge; National Lottery Update. **11.50** **Snooker: The Masters – Extra.** Hazel Irvine presents. **1.50** Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.55** BBC News.

BBC2

6.05 Race to Super Bowl 50. **6.55** **Film:** Wonder Man. (1945) Comedy musical, starring Danny Kaye and Virginia Mayo. **8.30** **Film:** The Prisoner of Zenda. (1952) Adventure, starring Stewart Granger. **10.10** **Home Under the Hammer.** (R) **11.10** Natural World. (R) **12.00** James Martin: Home Comforts. (R) **12.45** James Martin: Home Comforts. (R) **1.30** Bargain Hunt. (R) **2.15** Escape to the Country. (R) **3.00** For What It's Worth. (R) **3.45** Flog It! (R) **4.30** Live Snooker: The Masters. The concluding frames of the opening semi-final. **5.30** Victorian Bakers. (R) **6.30** **Dad's Army.** Captain Mainwaring and his platoon are challenged to a cricket match by Warden Hodges, who has signed up a professional for his side. Featuring a guest appearance by former England and Yorkshire fast bowler Fred Trueman. Vintage comedy first shown in 1970, starring Arthur Lowe and Bill Pertwee. (R) **7.00** **Live Snooker: The Masters.** Hazel Irvine presents coverage of the second semi-final from Alexandra Palace, London, where the line-up for the final will be confirmed over the best of 11 frames. Shaun Murphy prevailed against Mark Allen with a 6-2 victory in last year's concluding semi-final, earning him a chance to claim the title in a contest against Neil Robertson. With commentary by Dennis Taylor, Ken Doherty, Stephen Hendry, John Virgo, Steve Davis and John Parrott. Subsequent programmes subject to change. **10.30** **QI XL.** Panellists Sue Perkins, Romesh Ranganathan, Bill Bailey and Alan Davies compete, as Stephen Fry hosts an extended edition of the irreverent quiz show. **11.15** **Insert Name Here.** Hugh Dennis, Omid Djalili, Roisin Conaty and Alice Roberts join captains Richard Osman and Josh Widdicombe to answer questions about famous people who share a name. (R) **11.45** **Dragons' Den.** The panel of entrepreneurs casts an eye over more business ideas, including an innovative camping stove and a scheme involving hard-boiled eggs. Evan Davis presents. (R) **12.45** **Film:** Spider. (2002) David Cronenberg's psychological thriller, starring Ralph Fiennes. **2.20** This Is BBC Two. Preview of upcoming programmes from BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Fort Boyard Ultimate Challenge. **6.25** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan. (R) **6.45** Dino Dan. (R) **7.00** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.05** Sooty. (R) **7.15** Super 4. (R) **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: Mr Bear: The Animated Series. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: Horrid Henry. (R) **8.10** Scrambled!: Nerds & Monsters. **8.30** Scrambled!: Thunderbirds Are Go. **9.05** Scrambled!: The Tom & Jerry Show. (R) **9.25** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **10.15** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **11.20** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **12.20** ITV News: Weather. **12.30** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **1.30** Judge Rinder. (R) **2.35** Tipping Point. (R) **3.35** Doc Martin. (R) **4.30** The Martin Lewis Money Show. (R) **5.00** The Saturday Night Story. (R) **6.05** **Regional Programme:** Weather. **6.15** **ITV News:** Weather. **6.30** **New You've Been Framed!** Harry Hill narrates more viewer-submitted comical mishaps, including an unusual take on Ninja Warrior UK and a fine example of why bicycle selfies are a bad idea. **7.00** **Ninja Warrior UK.** Ben Shephard, Rochelle Humes and Chris Kamara host the fourth heat, as competitors from across the UK test their strength, speed and courage in the obstacle-course challenge. **8.00** **Take Me Out.** Paddy McGuinness lines up another selection of potential sweethearts for his 30 single women. This time, the love lift delivers Irish dancer Mitch from Bristol, diamond consultant Adam from Essex, Salisbury-based musician Nathan, and Rick, an ice hockey player from Blackburn. Each man sets out to impress the ladies, hoping they keep their lights on as a sign of approval, and Paddy provides an update from last week's couples on the Isle of Fernandos. **9.20** **The Jonathan Ross Show.** Veteran actor Michael Caine visits the studio for his first British chat show appearance in nearly 10 years, along with Creed stars Michael B. Johnson and Sylvester Stallone. **10.20** **ITV News:** Weather. **10.35** **Film:** Lethal Weapon 4. (1998) Action adventure, starring Mel Gibson. **12.50** Jackpot247. **3.00** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.15 How I Met Your Mother. (R) **6.40** The King of Queens. (R) **7.05** The King of Queens. (R) **7.30** Ironman Switzerland. **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **9.00** The Morning Line. **10.00** **Film:** Flash Gordon. (1960) **12.10** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **12.35** Marvel's Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D. **1.30** Channel 4 Racing. Live coverage from Warwick, Wetherby and Chelmsford City. **4.00** Come Dine with Me. (R) **4.35** Come Dine with Me. (R) **5.05** Come Dine with Me. (R) **5.35** Come Dine with Me. (R) **6.05** **Channel 4 News.** **6.35** **Location, Location, Location.** Kirstie Allsopp comes to the aid of two friends who want to move to East London, and are pooling their resources in the hope of getting a shared house together. Phil Spencer helps a local woman hoping to make an investment that will help her with her long-term goal of quitting her job and making a living as a yoga teacher. (R) **7.30** **World's Weirdest Homes.** Charlie Luxton presents a guide to 20 of the most unusual residences ever built, before revealing what he considers the weirdest house on Earth. Residences featured include a skip that provides living space for an artist, a rotating house, a plane in the middle of a forest, a converted nuclear missile silo, a perfect replica of the family home from The Munsters, a house shaped like a giant beagle, a summerhouse by a frequently flooding river and an apartment block that looks like a giant snake. (R) **9.00** **Film:** Fast & Furious 6. (2013) Premiere. A gang of fugitives is reunited by an FBI manhunter, who offers the criminals pardons in return for their help. They must go to Europe and bring down a criminal syndicate led by a ruthless London gangster, whose right-hand woman is an old friend of theirs assumed to be dead. Action thriller sequel, with Vin Diesel, Dwayne Johnson and Michelle Rodriguez. **11.40** **Film:** The Running Man. (1987) A convict takes part in a brutal TV game show in which he is hunted by a series of gadget-wielding killers. Sci-fi action adventure, with Arnold Schwarzenegger. **1.30** Hollyoaks. (R) **3.30** Phil Spencer: Secret Agent. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **8.55** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **9.30** The Saturday Show. **11.35** Police Interceptors. (R) **12.30** Police Interceptors. (R) **1.30** **Film:** Columbo: A Matter of Honour. (1976) Crime drama, starring Peter Falk. **3.00** Nightmare Tenants. Slum Landlords. (R) **4.00** Ben Fogle: New Lives in the Wild. (R) **5.00** Ice Road Truckers. (R) **6.00** **5 News Weekend.** **6.05** **World War II in Colour.** How Britain remained defiant after the retreat from Dunkirk, the development of radar and a breakthrough in cracking German codes that helped it win the Battle of Britain. (R) **7.00** **World War II Battlefield Recovery.** A four-man team of excavation experts sets out to retrieve Second World War relics from the battlefields of the Eastern Front, telling the stories of fallen soldiers by examining their remains. **8.00** **Chasing Monsters.** Adventurer Cyril Chauquet visits remote waters to seek out the colossal goliath grouper, the world's largest marine fish, which can grow to more than 800 pounds. **9.00** **The Championship: Football League Tonight.** Kelly Cates and George Riley present extended highlights of the weekend's second-tier matches, including a Yorkshire derby as Sheffield Wednesday met Leeds United at Hillsborough. **10.00** **Goal Rush: Football League Tonight.** Kelly Cates and George Riley present all the goals from League One and League Two, where fixtures included Bradford City v Oldham Athletic and Accrington Stanley v Portsmouth. **10.30** **Celebrity Big Brother.** Highlights of the famous housemates' past 24 hours under the all-seeing eye of Big Brother, as they try to get used to living alongside one another. **11.30** **Lip Sync Battle UK: Jason Manford v Michelle Keegan.** Melanie Brown and Professor Green present the musical game show as comedian Jason Manford and actress Michelle Keegan go head to head lip-synching to a hit song. (R) **12.00** SuperCasino. **3.10** Celebrity Big Brother. (R) **4.00** Celebrity Big Brother: Heroes and Villains. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three
7.00 Don't Tell the Bride **8.00** Top Gear **9.00** Live at the Apollo **9.30** **Film:** Drive (2011) **11.05** Family Guy **12.55** Russell Howard's Good News **1.25** Live at the Apollo **1.55** Siblings **2.25** **Film:** Bedtime Stories (2008) **4.00** Close
BBC Four
7.00 Stories from the Dark Earth: Meet the Ancestors Revisited **8.00** Castles – Britain's Fortified History **9.00** The Young Montalbano **10.40** Music Moguls: Masters of Pop **11.40** One-Hit Wonders at the BBC **12.40** Danny Baker's Great Album Showdown **1.45** Top of the Pops **3.05** Sounds of the Eighties **3.30** Close
ITV2
11.20 Ninja Warrior UK **12.20** You've Been Framed! Gold **1.50** **Film:** What a Girl Wants (2003) **4.00** **Film:** Bean (1997) **5.45** **Film:** The Lost World: Jurassic Park (1997) **8.15** Beowulf: Return to the Sheldals **9.20** Take Me Out – The Gossio **10.20** **Film:** American Pie 2 (2001) **12.25** The Keith Lemon Sketch Show **1.20** Reality Bites **1.55** Viral Top **2.30** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.55** Teleshoppers **3.55** ITV2 Nightscreen
ITV3
11.50 A Touch of Frost **1.50** The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes **4.05** **Film:** Columbo: Butterfly in Shades of Grey (1993) **6.05** Lewis **8.00** Foyle's War **10.00** Agatha Christie's Marple **12.00** Marchlands **1.00** The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes **2.00** Man About the House **2.30** Teleshopping
ITV4
1.15 **Film:** Captain Newman MD (1964) **3.50** **Film:** Tobruk (1967) **6.00** Storage Wars: Texas **8.00** Storage Wars **9.00** **Film:** Assassins (1995) **11.40** **Film:** The Glimmer Man (1995) **1.35** Nitro Circus **2.00** The Professionals **2.55** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping
E4
11.00 How I Met Your Mother **12.00** Couples Come Dine with Me **2.00** The Goldbergs **3.00** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **4.00** The Big Bang Theory **9.00** **Film:** Road Models (2008) **11.00** Gogglebox **12.40** The Inbetweeners **1.50** The IT Crowd **2.45** How I Met Your Mother **3.30** Don't Trust the B**** in Apartment 23 **4.15** Revenge
Film4
11.00 The Frogmen (1951) **1.00** The Three Musketeers (1993) **3.05** Carry On Up the Khyber (1968) **5.00** Fast Girls (2012) **6.45** Tootsie (1982) **9.00** Contraband (2012) **11.10** AllieLua (2014) **1.00** The Wolfman (2010) **3.20** Close

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Cheers to an amazing weight loss in 2016

Slimming World is the most advanced slimming organisation in the UK. With over 13,000 groups held nationwide each week, it's never been easier to start your weight loss journey!

Your local consultants lost a staggering 956 stone between January and November 2015! That is over 80 stone per month.

With results like this it's no wonder they were silver team of the year, won team of the month and district of the month in 2015.

Your local Slimming World consultants offer advice on food optimisation. The master stroke that makes food optimising fast, effective and so easy is the amount of FREE foods you can eat. The only restriction is your appetite!

There are many benefits to food optimising with Slimming World. One of our members who was diagnosed with diabetes joined his local group and lost an amazing 5 stone and, as a result of his weight loss, not only did his health improve dramatically, but his insulin and tablets dependence reduced dramatically too!

With 70% of children being overweight in Dudley, Slimming World welcome children to their groups. Children go free when aged between 9-16 and are accompanied by an adult.

Slimming World also welcomes slimming on referral from your local GP. This is a long established partnership scheme between health professionals and Slimming World, providing overweight patients with effective, long lasting, community-based weight loss management. Free membership is offered in 12 week blocks.

We understand that losing weight can be difficult between work, looking after the children and normal day to day tasks, so Slimming World have created a selection of convenient, delicious, healthy meals and they are only available at Iceland! Whether it's Lasagne, Cottage Pie or Chicken Tikka Masalla, you can enjoy all these AND MORE completely Syn free with our Slimming World range.

If you want a hunger free weight loss, why not give your local Slimming World consultant a call and "eat happy ... be happy" in 2016



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**More people in the UK choose to attend a Slimming World group each week than any other weight loss group.*

CHOICE



Liz White

Call the Midwife (BBC1, 8pm)
Hot on the heels of the Christmas special comes the start of the period drama's fifth series. It's now 1961 and the winds of social change are starting to blow into Poplar – but that's not the only matter that's about to alter. The nurses' uniforms have had a tweak, enabling them to ditch their ill-fitting dresses for something with a more flattering cut. It's Easter when we catch up with the ladies, and Patsy's attention is taken by local mother Rhoda Mullucks who, along with her husband, struggles to cope after giving birth to a baby with severe deformities. Meanwhile, Trixie launches an exercise class that highlights how little Poplar's womenfolk know about their own bodies.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. 7.35 Match of the Day. (R) **9.00 The Andrew Marr Show.** **10.00 The Big Questions.** **11.00 Regional Programme.** **12.15 Bargain Hunt.** (R) **1.00 BBC News.** Weather. **1.15 Homes Under the Hammer.** (R) **2.15 Eat Well for Less?** (R) **3.15 Escape to the Country.** **4.15 Lifetime.** **4.25 Songs of Praise.** **5.00 Great Barrier Reef** with David Attenborough. (R) **6.00 BBC News.** **6.20 Regional Programme.** **6.30 Countryfile.** Matt Baker and Ellie Harrison explore Gloucestershire, visiting Batsford Arboretum, where the trees are being given a health check, and the International Centre for Birds of Prey, where Californian Condors are being bred in captivity. Plus, Josh Widdicombe visits a Welsh campsite and beach that holds special memories for him and his family. Adam Henson meets one of the finalists from last year's Food and Farming Awards and Tom Heap reports on neglected and abandoned horses. Including Weather for the Week Ahead. **7.30 Still Open All Hours.** A bridegroom has cold feet, and it falls to Granville to ensure he makes it to the wedding. Mrs Featherstone continues her search for a husband, and spies two likely candidates. **8.00 Call the Midwife.** New series. Patsy helps to deliver a severely deformed baby, and the sisters rally round to give the parents the support they need. A keep fit class leads to a medical emergency. **9.00 War & Peace.** Pierre fights a duel with Dolokhov, Natasha and Sonya both receive unexpected marriage proposals, and Nikolai makes the mistake of placing his trust in a dangerous friend. **10.00 BBC News.** **10.20 Regional Programme.** **10.30 Match of the Day 2.** Mark Chapman reviews the latest Premier League action, featuring Liverpool v Manchester United. **11.30 Film: The Devil's Double.** (2011) An Iraqi soldier is plunged into a world of murder and violence when he becomes a body double for Saddam Hussein's son. Fact-based drama, with Dominic Cooper and Ludvine Sagnier. **1.10 Weather** for the Week Ahead. **1.15 BBC News.**

BBC2

6.30 The A to Z of TV Gardening. (R) **7.15 Monty Don's Italian Gardens.** (R) **8.15 Countryfile.** (R) **9.15 Saturday Kitchen Best Bites.** **10.45 James Martin: Home Comforts.** (R) **11.30 James Martin: Home Comforts.** (R) **12.15 MOTD2 Extra.** **1.00 Live Snooker: The Masters.** Hazel Irvine presents coverage of the opening eight frames of the final from Alexandra Palace, London, where the best-of-19-frames match takes place. Subsequent programmes subject to change. **5.15 Ski Sunday.** **6.00 World's Sneakiest Animals.** Chris Packham features animals that utilise devious tactics to win a mate and raise a family, such as bower birds and fiddler crabs, who use optical illusions to impress a female, and male topi antelope, who fake danger to give them an edge. He also looks at family life, including the chicks that blackmail their parents, and the honeyguide bird that dupes another species into raising its young. Last in the series. (R) **7.00 Live Snooker: The Masters.** Hazel Irvine presents concluding coverage of the final from Alexandra Palace, London, where a maximum of 11 frames will be played to decide this year's champion. Shaun Murphy claimed his first Masters title with a 10-2 victory over Neil Robertson in 2015, winning all four frames in the second session to avenge a defeat suffered at the hands of "the Thunder" in this match three years earlier. With commentary by Dennis Taylor, Ken Doherty, Stephen Hendry, John Virgo, Steve Davis and John Parrott. Subsequent programmes subject to change. **11.00 Film: Jo Nesbo's Headhunters.** (2011) A corporate headhunter moonlights as a thief, but his latest robbery leads him to uncover a dangerous secret. Crime thriller, starring Alisk Hennie and Nikolaj Coster-Waldau. **12.35 Sign Zone: Countryfile.** Matt Baker learns about oilseed-rapeseed farming in Hertfordshire with chef Jean-Christophe Novelli, and Adam Henson meets the winner of last year's Countryfile Farming Hero award. (R) **1.35 Holly City.** Essie allows her personal life to affect her work when she has to deal with a difficult mother-and-son relationship, while Guy's career goes from strength to strength. (R) **2.35 This is BBC Two.** Preview of upcoming programmes from BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Fort Boyard Ultimate Challenge. **6.25 Pat & Stan.** (R) **6.35 Dino Dan.** (R) **6.45 Dino Dan.** (R) **7.00 Signed Stories: Share a Story.** (R) **7.15 Super 4.** (R) **7.30 Scrambled!** Scrambled! **7.35 Scrambled!** Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **7.50 Scrambled!** Horrid Henry. (R) **8.10 Scrambled!** Nerds & Monsters. **8.30 Scrambled!** Bear Grylls Survival Story. **9.05 Scrambled!** The Tom & Jerry Show. (R) **9.25 Murder, She Wrote.** (R) **10.20 The Jeremy Kyle Show.** (R) **11.20 The Jeremy Kyle Show.** (R) **12.25 The Jeremy Kyle Show.** (R) **1.30 ITV News; Weather.** **1.35 Catchphrase.** (R) **2.20 Ninja Warrior UK.** (R) **3.20 Film: You Only Live Twice.** (1967) **5.35 Regional Programme; Weather.** **5.45 ITV News; Weather.** **6.00 Unbelievable Moments Caught on Camera.** Part two of a. Alastair Stewart presents footage of extraordinary animal rescues, including a couple who came to the aid of a humpback whale that had got caught in fishing nets. **7.00 Beowulf: Return to the Shieldlands.** Rheda leads a search for Slean, who has disappeared without trace – but is also under increasing pressure to identify the traitor before her people turn against her. **8.00 Endeavour.** The detective investigates the disappearance of a Dutch au pair, which seems connected to rivalry amid the city's academics. His search leads him to a family estate in the Oxfordshire countryside where he meets three siblings divided by personal demons and shared loss. Endeavour suspects there is a link between the disappearance and an unsolved case from years before, but as the investigation continues, conflict erupts between his fellow officers. When a group of teenagers makes a horrifying discovery, he suspects someone is manipulating events from afar. **10.00 ITV News; Weather.** **10.20 Joanna Lumley's Trans-Siberian Adventure.** Joanna concludes her journey, visiting the city where the Russian royal family was killed, before returning to the place where she was photographed in 1966. Last in the series. (R) **11.20 Perspectives: Eddie Redmayne on War Art.** (R) **12.15 Jackpot247.** **3.00 The Jeremy Kyle Show USA.** (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.15 How I Met Your Mother. (R) **6.40 The King of Queens.** (R) **7.05 The King of Queens.** (R) **7.30 Everybody Loves Raymond.** (R) **7.55 Everybody Loves Raymond.** (R) **8.30 Frasier.** (R) **9.00 Frasier.** (R) **9.30 Sunday Brunch.** **12.30 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces.** (R) **1.30 Location, Location, Location.** (R) **2.35 The Big Bang Theory.** (R) **3.05 The Big Bang Theory.** (R) **3.30 The Big Bang Theory.** (R) **3.55 The Simpsons.** (R) **4.25 The Simpsons.** (R) **5.30 Film: Epic.** (2013) Premiere. Animated adventure, with the voice of Amanda Seyfried. **7.30 Channel 4 News.** **8.00 Walking the Himalayas.** Levison Wood returns to the site of his car crash to resume the journey, and is reunited with the people who saved his life. He keeps a promise to Binod by accompanying him on a trek to his family home in Pokhara, before continuing their travels with members of the Gurung tribe, who risk their lives to collect honey from wild bees living on high cliffs. They visit the site of an earthquake in 2014 and visit Kathmandu, before crossing the border into Bhutan. **9.00 Deutschland 83.** While at a Nato conference in Brussels, Moritz gets an assignment to seduce a security analyst's secretary so he can install a microphone in their office. He receives word that his mother is on the shortlist for a kidney transplant, and provides a sample of his blood to see if he is a suitable donor. Meanwhile in the East, Annett discovers her mother is hiding something from her. In Germany. **10.00 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown.** Jimmy Carr hosts the comedy panel show, with guests Jason Manford and Roisin Conaty joining forces with team captains Sean Lock and Jon Richardson. (R) **11.05 Film: The Final Destination.** (2009) Four teenagers escape being killed in a tragedy at a racetrack – only to start dying in a series of gruesome accidents. Horror sequel, starring Bobby Campo and Shantel VanSanten. **12.35 15 Kids and Counting.** (R) **1.30 Come with Me.** (R) **3.55 The Fabulous Baker Brothers.** **4.50 Kirstie's Vintage Gems.** (R) **5.00 The Restoration Man.** Revisiting a builder who converted a former 18th-century folio. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! Peppa Pig. **6.05 Bananas in Pyjamas.** (R) **6.15 Angelina Ballerina.** (R) **6.30 Bob the Builder.** (R) **6.45 Ticky Toc.** (R) **6.55 Zack and Quack.** (R) **7.05 Roodbarb and Custard Too.** (R) **7.15 Make Way for Noddy.** (R) **7.25 Paw Patrol.** (R) **7.40 Little Princess.** (R) **7.50 Pip Ahoy!** (R) **8.00 Blaze and the Monster Machines.** (R) **8.25 Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom.** (R) **8.40 Wanda and the Alien.** (R) **8.55 Toby's Travelling Circus.** (R) **9.10 Jelly Jamm.** (R) **9.30 LazyTown.** (R) **9.55 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.** (R) **10.30 The Championship: Football League Tonight.** (R) **11.30 Goal Rush: Football League Tonight.** (R) **11.55 Police Interceptors.** (R) **1.55 Film: Blue Streak.** (1998) Comedy, starring Martin Lawrence. **3.40 Film: Cheaper by the Dozen 2.** (2005) Comedy sequel, starring Steve Martin. **5.25 Film: George of the Jungle.** (1997) Comedy, starring Brendan Fraser. **7.10 Film: Aoe Ventures: When Nature Calls.** (1995) The eccentric pet detective is coaxed out of self-imposed exile in a Buddhist monastery to visit Africa and help search for a sacred white bat. However, his unique investigative talents are tested to the limits as he faces a race against time to find the missing creature and prevent a tribal war. Comedy sequel, starring Jim Carrey, Simon Callow and Bob Gunton. Edited for language and sexual content. **8.55 5 News Weekend.** **9.00 Celebrity Big Brother.** A chance to catch up with the latest events inside the house as the celebrities cope with living under constant surveillance, with all the arguments and alliances, as well as the revelations in the diary room. **10.00 Film: Eat Pray Love.** (2010) Premiere. A divorced woman goes on a journey around the world, hoping to find the inner peace she feels she has always lacked. Drama, starring Julia Roberts and James Franco. **12.40 Tattoo Disasters UK.** A drunken man who used a tattoo gun to etch names on his arms. (R) **1.05 SuperCasino.** Viewers get the chance to take part in live interactive gaming, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team. **3.10 Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun.** Cameras follow magician Barry, who tries to forge a new life in Benidorm. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three **7.00 Great TV Mistakes** **7.10 Pop's Greatest Dance Crazes** **7.40 The Voice UK** **9.00 Film: Looper** (2012) **10.50 Russell Howard's Good News** **11.20 Family Guy** **12.05 American Dad!** **12.45 Russell Howard's Good News** **1.15 Siblings** **1.45 Pop's Greatest Dance Crazes** **2.15 Great TV Mistakes** **2.25 Film: 102 Dalmatians** (2000) **4.00 Close** **BBC Four** **7.00 India's Frontier Railways** **8.00 Empire of the Tsars: Romanov Russia** with Lucy Worsley **9.00 Storyville: The Golden Age of Circus – Show of Shows** **10.15 Timeshift: A Day at the Zoo** **11.15 Lost Horizons: The Big Bang** **12.15 Alex Higgins: The People's Champion** **1.15 20th Century Battlefields** **2.15 American Nomads** **3.45 Close** **ITV2** **11.40 Take Me Out** **12.55 Take Me Out – The Gossip** **2.00 You've Been Framed!** **2.55 Film: Nanny McPhee and the Big Bang** (2010) **5.05 Film: Jurassic Park III** (2001) **6.55 Minion Madness** **7.10 Film: Hotel Transylvania** (2012) **9.00 Film: Quantum of Solace** (2008) **11.10 Film: Not Another Teen Movie** (2011) **1.15 Reality Bites** **1.50 Planet's Funniest Animals** **2.15 Teleshopping** **5.45 ITV2 Nightscreen** **ITV3** **11.45 Film: Columbo:** Butterfly in Shades of Grey (1993) **1.40 The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes** **3.55 Agatha Christie's Marple** **5.55 Midsomer Murders** **8.00 Me and My Guide Dog** **9.00 Neil Diamond: One Night Only** **10.15 Film: Captain Corelli's Mandolin** (2001) **12.45 Film: Ooh, You Are Awful!** (1972) **2.30 On the Buses** **3.50 Heartbeat** **ITV4** **2.05 Film: The Hanging Tree** (1959) **4.15 Film: Apache** (1954) **6.05 Film: Smokey and the Bandit** (1977) **8.00 The Chase: Celebrity Special** **9.00 Film: The Client** (1994) **11.30 Film: 30 Days of Night** (2007) **1.45 Alias Smith and Jones** **2.40 Movies Now** **2.50 ITV4 Nightscreen** **E4** **5.10 The Big Bang Theory: Superheroes** **9.00 Marvel's Agents of SHIELD** **10.00 Tattoo Fixers** **11.00 Rude Tube** **12.05 The Inbetweeners** **1.15 The IT Crowd** **2.20 Marvel's Agents of SHIELD** **3.15 Don't Trust the B*** in Apartment 23** **Film4** **11.00 13 Rue Madeleine** (1946) **1.00 Clueless** (1995) **2.50 Napoleon Dynamite** (2004) **4.40 The Princess Diaries** (2001) **6.55 America's Sweethearts** (2001) **9.00 Tatort** (2008) **10.45 Mr Nice** (2010)

ADVERTISEMENT

Weddings

at Himley Hall

Himley Hall is an eighteenth century Grade II* listed building set in 180 acres of 'Capability Brown' landscaped parkland. As the former stately home of the Earls of Dudley Himley Hall was a luxurious, up-to-date home, so fashionable that in the 1930's it was a regular weekend retreat for Royal visitors, including Edward, Prince of Wales. In 1934 the Duke and Duchess of Kent spent the first two weeks of their honeymoon at Himley.

Today, couples may marry where Royal newlyweds once took their honeymoon, and photograph their special day in the grounds where princes and earls once strolled.

Marriage Rooms

Himley Hall has three rooms licensed for civil wedding ceremonies. The Pink Room, once the Library of Himley Hall, overlooks the terrace gardens and has views towards the Great Lake. It is suitable for wedding ceremonies for up to 45 guests and has the added advantage of private access onto the terrace for photographs or refreshments. The elegant Green Room, originally the formal Dining Room of the Earls of Dudley and complete with historic chandelier; also overlooks the terrace gardens with stunning views towards the lake. It is suitable for up to 75 guests. The Oak Room is newly licensed for up to 55 guests and looks onto the courtyard of the Hall with the added charm of wood panelling and a large oak fireplace.

Wedding Breakfasts

The celebration after your wedding ceremony completes your perfect day. Wedding receptions may be held in most of Himley Hall's refurbished rooms.

The elegance of Himley is epitomised by the grandeur of its former Dining Room - the Green Room, complete with its

imposing 'air-twist' crystal chandelier. Wedding guests can celebrate in historic chic surroundings, enjoying window views overlooking the Great Pool. The warmth and intimacy of Himley's Oak Room, Himley Hall's former Billiard Room, offers guests the sophistication of a by-gone era combined with the cosiness of discreet luxury that sensitive restoration has created. The Green Room and Oak Room are available as part of a wedding package for smaller wedding breakfasts for up to 50 persons.

The North Wing

The North Wing, which once housed the Earl of Dudley's swimming pool and private cinema, has been transformed into an elegant Art-Deco style banqueting suite and lounge bar, perfect for larger wedding breakfasts and evening celebrations. Magnificent 1930's style bespoke lighting, period decor and stylish soft furnishings highlight the superb attention to detail which has established Himley Hall's North Wing as a dazzling venue.

The Swimming Pool room includes a dance floor and lighting, specifically designed for evening functions. It can cater for up to 90 guests for a seated meal and between 80-140 guests for an evening event.

The Cinema Bar offers a sumptuous retreat from the lively Swimming Pool during your celebration. Exquisite 1930's style café bar furniture sit adjacent to the 'birds-eye' maple and chrome bar, overlooked by images of stars of the silver screen from the Art Deco era.

Himley Hall Wedding Open Day - Seeing Is Better Than Imagining

On Sunday 24th January from 11am until 4 pm Himley Hall opens its doors for a special 'Open Day' and invites couples and their families to view the ceremony rooms exactly as they can be for their perfect day

Because seeing reality is better than imagination, each of Himley's licensed rooms will be set out ready for a ceremony and the Swimming Pool Room and Oak Room will be arranged for celebration receptions, complete with floral decorations

Experienced wedding co-ordinators and catering managers will be available to discuss options available to couples and Registrars from the Staffordshire Registration Service will be on hand to guide couples through the civil ceremony process at Himley Hall. The Weddings Open Day at Himley is free admission so why not pop in for a complimentary coffee and chat and see if Himley can make your 'perfect day'?

HIMLEY HALL AND PARK

Wedding

Open Day

Sunday 24 January 2016 • 11.00 am - 4.00 pm

Seeing is better than imagining...

View the ceremony and reception rooms at Himley Hall set out ready for your perfect day. Meet Himley's wedding co-ordinators and catering team together with Registrars from the Staffordshire Registration Service

Admission free

Tea and coffee available

2016 full packages available from £5,380



FILM CHOICES

MONDAY
Crimes of the Mind, Channel 5, 3.15pm
Carolyn Raeburn signs her 16-year-old daughter Laura up for a few weeks of horse-riding lessons at a remote ranch, but the teenager ends up being brainwashed by a woman who grooms her to take the place of her own murdered child. Fact-based thriller, starring Christina Cox and Paula Trickey. (2014)

TUESDAY
The Heist, BBC1, 11.45pm
Roger, a security guard working at an American museum, discovers several pieces from a collection he has defended for more than a Determined to stop the sale from taking place, he enlists the aid of two like-minded guards in a desperate mission to steal the artworks. Crime comedy, starring Christopher Walken, Morgan Freeman and William H Macy. (2009)

WEDNESDAY
Good, BBC1, 11.45pm
A literary professor in 1930s Germany finds his work paraded by the fast-rising Nazi party, and begins to enjoy the privileges conferred by their acclaim. Drama, with Viggo Mortensen and Jason Isaacs. (2008)



The Heist, Tuesday, BBC1, 11.45pm

THURSDAY
Virtual Lies, Channel 5, 3.15pm
A woman discovers her husband is having an affair over the internet. He is shamed into giving up the relationship and trying to save their troubled marriage, but the concerned wife soon discovers her online rival is dangerously obsessed with him and will stop at nothing to drive them apart. Thriller, starring Christina Cox and Marc Menard. (2012)

FRIDAY
You Only Live Twice, ITV, 11.10pm
James Bond is sent on a mission to uncover the truth behind the disappearances of Soviet and American space capsules before the mutually suspicious superpowers go to war. The trail leads to Japan, where Bond finally comes face to face with his arch-enemy Blofeld. Spy thriller, starring Sean Connery, Donald Pleasence, Akiko Wakabayashi and Bernard Lee. (1967)

Joyce is still managing to have fun in the sun

With the departure of the Garveys at the end of the last season, many thought that ITV's sun-kissed comedy may have finally reached the end of it's shelf life. However, last week's hilarious series eight opener proved that there are still plenty of laughs to be had with the holidaymakers at the Solana. Replacing the Garveys as the main family in the show are the Dawsons – Sheron (Julie Graham) and Eddie (Steve Edge) – hoping for a relaxing holiday with their children Rob (Josh Bolt) and Jodie (Honor Kneafsey). However, in true Benidorm style, a peaceful time is not what they get, especially as Grandad 'Eddie' Dawson (Bobby Knutt) tags along. In tonight's episode, Eddie attempts to make amends with his daughter in law Sheron, which is not easy. Julie Graham who plays the matriarch says: "She's got a temper! She's not very pleased that Billy's father Eddie has gatecrashed the family holiday. It's putting her marriage under a huge strain. She feels like she's being made to hang out with a really annoying child. "The theme running through the series with them is that Billy is trying to find the right moment to tell Sheron that Eddie is going to move in with them back home. He's obviously putting it off because he knows how she's going to react!" Another former Solana resident, Tiger Dyke (Danny Walters), is back for a lads holiday and has brought his pal Joey Ellis (Nathan Bryon) along. Tonight, the lads take a liking to new staff girl Amber, but do they stand a chance and are they simply in Spain for the sun, sea and sex? "There's a bit of that, but the comedy comes from them being such fools," Walters explains. "They are so innocent, it's not all about drinking and ladies. It's about two mates having fun and they get things wrong all the time." Newcomer to the show, Bryon, agrees. "They are both utterly useless to be honest," he says. So there are few new characters on the Costa Blanca, but one old face who has returned is Jake Canuso, who plays Mateo, the show's wannabe Lothario who is back, fresh from a short stint in Madrid. In this episode, Mateo becomes the odd choice to run a staff first aid course. And stalwart Canuso is in no doubt that there is plenty of life left in the show, eight years down the line. "It has real heart, it has craziness, jokes and the campness, but underneath all that there is a realness to the characters," he says. "They all have their flaws and you get a glimmer of that every now and again. "I also think the time of year that the show is on is perfect, as it's cold and dark outside and you switch on your telly and see sunshine and blue skies." Of course, having great guest stars who are eager to frequent the Solana does hurt either. The likes of Shane Ritchie, John Challis, Michael Fenton Stevens, Frances Barber and Angus Deayton all cropping up in future weeks, while tonight's guest star is none other than legendary comedian and actor Roy Hudd.



Sherrie Hewson stars in Benidorm, Monday, ITV, 9pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY
Silent Witness BBC1, 9pm
Part one of two. An ex-convict is found murdered in his home and suspicion immediately lands on a recently released child killer. Nikki and the Lyell team are introduced to forensic psychologist Sasha Blackburn, who works closely with those released from prison on licence, as both the victim and one of the suspects are clients of hers. The investigators soon learn that it is not just the minds of these young men that are fragile, but their freedom is too. Forensic crime drama, guest starring Lyndsey Marshal and Niamh Cusack.

TUESDAY
Phone Shop Idol BBC2, 10pm
New series. Britain's mobile phone sales force battle it out in 'Shop Idol', an annual industry competition, in a test of their technical knowledge, customer service and sales skills. Over six months, the salespeople will take part in competitive heats presided over by three judges, with the winner receiving a fast-tracked career. In the first edition, the most ambitious phone shop staff are selected to represent their company. Their customer approach is then tested in a secretly filmed visit.

WEDNESDAY
The National Television Awards ITV, 7.30pm
The nation's most popular shows and stars gather at The O2, London for the ceremony celebrating the best of British TV over the past year. Viewers choose the winners via a nationwide poll, with TV talking points such as Poldark, Doctor Foster, Humans, Downton Abbey, Gogglebox, The Great British Bake Off, X Factor, and Strictly Come Dancing competing for honours. Includes special guest performers, plus Billy Connolly receiving the NTAs Special Recognition Award from Dustin Hoffman. Presented by Dermot O'Leary.

Bodyshockers: Nips, Tucks and Tattoos Channel 4, 10pm
A new year makes many want to try new things, such as get a tattoo or transform our bodies and faces in an attempt to stand out. But some folks like to take such things to the extreme as this show proves. There's a growing trend of irreversible tattoos, alarming sub dermals and huge breast enhancements, as Katie Piper reveals. She'll be chatting to

folks using ever more extreme ways to make their faces and bodies stand out. They include Amy, an animal lover who had her eyes tattooed black to look like a horse and her tongue split to look like a snake. We also meet Andrea, a party girl tired of her giant double-F boob job.

THURSDAY
Death in Paradise BBC1, 9pm
There's rarely a dull moment for the models at a local fashion show, whether it's the pressure of quick changes between parading up and down the catwalk or the perils of tearing the odd dress. However, when Zoe McKay is strangled a few moments after leaving the catwalk, DI Humphrey Goodman and his team are called in to investigate. As always the investigation proves to be far from easy. There are no apparent witnesses and a lack of DNA evidence. Kris Marshall and Danny John Jules star.



Bodyshockers: Nips, Tucks and Tattoos, Wednesday, Channel 4, 10pm

The Story of China BBC2, 9pm
New series. Michael Wood tells the story of the world's newest superpower, exploring the stories, people, culture and landscapes that have helped create its character over 4,000 years. He begins by looking at ancestry, one of the great themes of Chinese history. He joins a 300-strong family as they reunite to carry out rituals for an ancestor who died in 1049, witnesses a million pilgrims at the shrine of the goddess Nu Wa, and hears about China's greatest archaeological discovery, the Oracle Bones, which reveal fascinating clues about the first great dynasty – the Shang.

FRIDAY
Shetland BBC1, 9pm
Perez quickly establishes that Robbie's body was retrieved from inside a shipping container. As such a thing can only be locked externally, the team now seeks a murderer – with Michael Maguire the prime suspect. A search of the ferry reveals that someone forced entry into the deck where the container was parked. Craig is implicated when Robbie's recovered phone reveals several missed calls from him, but Maguire remains heavily in the frame after the team discovers he recently made a sizable cash withdrawal.

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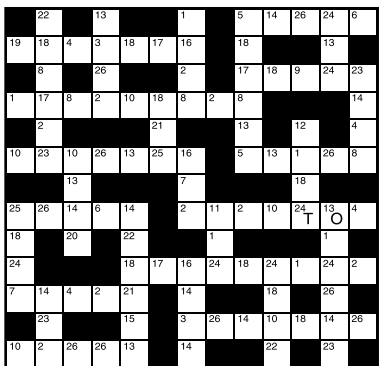
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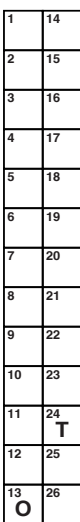
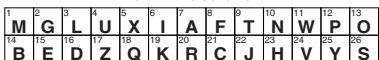
BRAIN GYM No.360

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:



Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

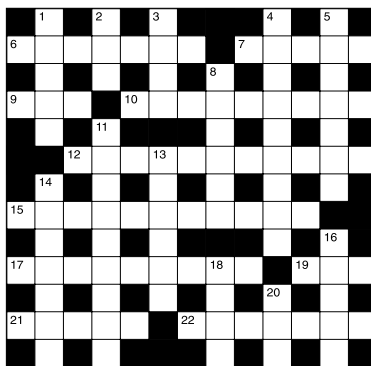
Cryptic Clues:

Across

- Reading about a description of a wood, perhaps (7)
- Maurice has a heart of gold (5)
- An expert well served (3)
- It's horrible fighting against the government (9)
- Martin hopes to mix, the very thing he hates (11)
- The sort of food people won't stand for (3-4,4)
- Happen to finish in the first three (4,5)
- Spot a little girl (3)
- Less than pleased with the contract (5)
- Has to row faster (7)

Down

- A boring couple (5)
- Service gratuity (3)
- Apportion food, say? (4)
- Killer who gives one a close shave (3-6)
- Steals the child while it sleeps? (7)
- Base Shakespearean character (6)
- It's bawled out - and is unlikely to react tamely (4,5)
- Les gets mixed up with the law, too (2,4)
- Possibly a term in a tower (7)
- He gave people the law and doctors directions (5)
- Overcook fish (4)
- Enclosure in the post you open (3)



Quick Clues:

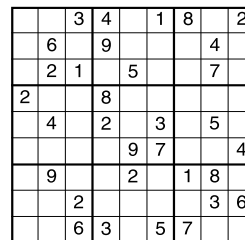
Across

- Hide (7)
- Tantalise (5)
- Charge (3)
- Melancholy (9)
- Changes of fortune (3-3-5)
- Tropical disease (6,5)
- Residing in (9)
- Moose (3)
- Beneath (5)
- Clumsy (7)

Down

- Lid (5)
- Perform (3)
- Ignoble (4)
- Warship (9)
- Amaze (7)
- Interfere (6)
- Clapped (9)
- Ever (6)
- Dismount (7)
- Vigilant (5)
- Information (4)
- Possess (3)

Sudoku



Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >



LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS: CRYPTIC - Across: 7 Railway ticket; 8 Chairman; 9 Owls; 10 Steers; 12 Inline; 14 Scared; 16 Glance; 18 Tomb; 20 Leap year; 22 Prefer a charge. Down: 1 Pathetic; 2 Place; 3 Palm; 4 Standing; 5 School; 6 Deal; 11 Saddlers; 13 No change; 15 Rebuff; 17 Anyway; 19 Oars; 21 Arch. QUICK - Across: 7 Heterogeneous; 8 Contempt; 9 Asks; 10 Attend; 12 Clench; 14 Propel; 16 Elapse; 18 Brat; 20 Cock-crow; 22 Disinterested. Down: 1 Reporter; 2 Settle; 3 Form; 4 Tentacle; 5 Rebate; 6 Dusk; 11 Delicate; 13 Customer; 15 Putrid; 17 Access; 19 Raid; 21 Care.

Quiz

- Who was the Roman goddess of peace?
- In which book by Dickens does Nathaniel Winkle appear?
- When is the first day of the grouse-shooting season?
- Who wrote the light opera Tales of Hoffmann?
- What, in communications, does the abbreviation STD stand for?
- Who directed the film Orphée?
- What is a Buff Orpington?
- Which composer wrote the symphonic poem Finlandia?
- From which country do the Ainu people come?
- In which ocean is the Banda Sea?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Saturn; 2 In the North Atlantic between the Azores and the West Indies; 3 New York State; 4 Woodpecker; 5 In an air crash; 6 Soh; 7 The art of decorating or carving shells and ivory; 8 Sir Joseph Paxton; 9 True or reliable facts and information; 10 A collapsible opera hat. **Niner:** VERACIOUS

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

874 gives an animal,
219 gives a child,
37564 gives a holy man.



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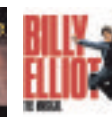
For the Theatre Weekend with Dinner option see the matinee performance before heading to the hotel for an evening meal. The Saturday Night option includes a ticket for the show to see an evening performance.

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Astras playing role in F1

Top F1 driver coach, Rob Wilson, isn't the most sympathetic driver you'll meet. Since Vauxhall loaned him two ex-press Astras last April in which to train some of the world's leading race drivers, the cars have covered the equivalent of five Le Mans 24-Hour races, all completely flat-out at Bruntingthorpe Proving Ground in Leicestershire.

Rob Wilson is possibly one of the most important players in Formula One that you've never heard of, and is instrumental in carving split seconds from the lap times of at least 12 drivers who've been on the grid in 2015. Their skills are honed in two standard production Astras – a 1.6 CDTi 136PS diesel Sports Tourer and a 1.6T 200PS petrol GTC.

"The Vauxhalls will do everything that an F1 car does dynamically, just at a far lower speed," said Rob. This allows me to explain the physics behind what the car is doing on the track in real time."

But as Rob swapped his beloved Astras for three models from the all-new generation range, it wasn't without some regret. 'The Astras have been as tough as old boots. Between them, they've covered over 16,000 track miles at Bruntingthorpe in the hands of successive F1, GP2, WRC, DTM and Indycar drivers, and they haven't missed a beat. They've chewed through 400 tyres and 40 sets of brake pads, but despite nearly 100,000 gearshifts and 43,000 severe braking manoeuvres, the cars are as nice to drive as they were on Day One.

"I often have a driver's race engineer in the back seat and everyone has commented how comfortable the cars are, and how predictable and stable their handling is. The cars have an unbelievably hard time out on our track, so I need to know that they're not



Rob Wilson is possibly one of the most important players in Formula One that you've never heard of

going to break. I have tried other makes of car, but they've always suffered some kind of breakdown. I'm really looking forward to spending next year in the new Astras."

Rob has taken delivery of three new Astras this month – all SRi models, two 1.6 CDTi 136PSs and one 1.4T 150PS – and has already sampled one on track, taking three seconds off his best lap time in the outgoing car. "You can feel the benefits that up to 200kgs of weight-loss has brought straight away. My drivers are going to enjoy their training even more in 2016."

So what have Rob's Astras had to endure this year?

- 16,000 track miles at full race speed
- 7,250 laps of Bruntingthorpe Proving Ground
- 2,250 corners on the limit
- 43,000 hard braking areas driven through
- 95,000 manual gearshifts
- 400 replacement tyres
- 30 sets of front brake pads
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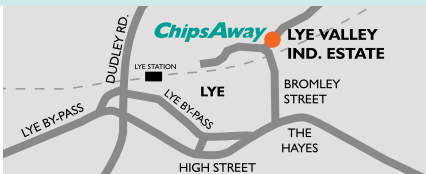
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Fast-selling Hyundai drives the Czech factory success

The new Tucson has become the fastest-selling Hyundai car in the UK and Europe since its launch last September.

With over 10,000 orders in the UK and 85,000 orders in Europe, the new compact SUV contributes to Hyundai Motor Manufacturing

Czech (HMMC) factory continuing to operate at full capacity.

Since production started of the Hyundai ix35 in June 2011, more than 700,000 C-SUVs have left the Czech plant, including the new Tucson – making C-SUVs the major contributor to the success of the factory.

Recently, HMMC celebrated its 7th anniversary of mass-production which started in November 2008 with the

first-generation Hyundai i30. More than 1.8 million cars have been produced, while also exporting to more than 60 markets around the world.

The factory has capacity to produce 300,000 cars and 600,000 transmissions a year.

It is also an important employer in the region, with 3,400 workers employed directly and a further 7,000 jobs created in the surrounding area.

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*Official EU-regulated test data are provided for comparison purposes and actual performance will depend on driving style, road conditions and other non-technical factors.

Blue is the new green for sporty hatchback

By John Griffiths

Blue is the new green, it seems, in the world of the sporty hatchback.

Bluemotion is the name of Volkswagen's economy models but the technology behind it has now found its way across a wider range of vehicles, including the latest GT.

This is the 1.4 litre Polo Blue GT, perhaps better described as a 'warm hatch' rather than a hot hatch because that designation truly belongs to the full-blown GT with its bigger 1.8 engine, more power and more pace. But it may well appeal to a wider range of drivers, being somewhat easier on the pocket and indeed on other parts of the anatomy with its more forgiving ride.

The direct injection, turbocharged petrol engine is a little cracker, providing 0 to 62mph acceleration in 7.8 seconds yet it's also capable of averaging more than 50mpg.

The Polo, as cars tend to do, have grown with successive generations so it's no longer the tiddler of the VW range and is easily capable of accommodating four adults in comfort, five at a pinch. It also comes with a trendy interior and high specification as befits a car which costs £18,485.

The 1.4 TSI engine isn't entirely new, and is pretty impressive in larger, heavier VW models so it's no real surprise that it makes the Polo a lively, fun drive that's also refined, as it's never really under strain. It has 147bhp and 250Nm of torque.

With its six-speed gearbox, 70mph in top equates to around 2,400rpm which gives it a more relaxed, refined feel than most small cars, and in fact more akin to bigger, more expensive metal. The extra torque imparted by the turbo means plenty of mid-range punch, too.

The theory of using a smaller engine fitted with a turbo-charger is pretty sound, and is being adopted by more and more car makers. Essentially you have extra economy under light loads, but then power when necessary you need something rather more dynamic, for example, a quick overtake.

The Blue GT has a couple of extra cards up its sleeve, including the aforementioned Bluemotion technology which includes improved aerodynamics to help it slice more cleanly through the air, with less drag.

There's also an automatic stop/start system and its Active Cylinder Technology, or ACT, which cuts off fuel to two of the four cylinders when the engine is under light load, such as when you're cruising on a light throttle.

The switch between two and four cylinders is entirely seamless: you'd never know if it wasn't for the '2-cylinder mode' message which pops up in the driver's information display. It doesn't just happen on steep downhill stretches of road, it even runs on two cylinders on level stretches of motorway which makes me wonder how much money I've wasted over the years by having four cylinders running constantly.

The Blue GT's official fuel average is 58.9mpg (CO2 rating a low 110g/km) while my own test figure was a fraction over 50mpg, which included a couple of long motorway runs and two pretty awful traffic jams. Few, if any, drivers reach the dizzy heights of the official laboratory test so I found my returns pretty impressive in 'real world' driving. That's particularly so with a car which has real performance potential, but clearly being seduced into the traffic lights grand prix will have a direct impact on your pocket.

The GT's lowered, sports suspension is firmer than the standard Polo, or perhaps that's emphasised the fat, low profile 215/40 tyres but it is sufficiently well damped to avoid any real discomfort over a typical British b-road.

The steering is perfectly weighted and positive, with confidence-inspiring neutral handling through bends and an electro-mechanical difference for added traction and stability in slippery conditions. There are also, as you'd expect these days, a range of electronic systems including stability and traffic controls, hill hold assist and brake assist.

Inside, the VW continues the 'blue' theme with blue alcantara panels in the grey leather and fabric sports-style seats. The rest of the cabin screams quality, too, with soft to the touch materials and clear instruments and secondary controls.

The centre console is dominated by the colour touch screen, which in the test car included satellite navigation (a £700 extra). It's an impressive system, as it also manages to warn of roadworks and queueing traffic on the road ahead.

It also, of course, functions as the control centre for the DAB radio and CD system, driver information and settings, and connectivity (it is full compatible with the latest generation of smart phones). Other standard equipment includes air conditioning, electric windows and mirrors, heat insulated tinted glass and front fog lamps.

Bearing in mind the Blue GT's high standard of finish, plus its impressive balance of performance and economy, the £18,485 looks more competitive than you might imagine against rival 'warm' hatchbacks. It will also prove cheaper to run, too, with its fuel economy, low CO2 rating and its group 23E (out of 50) insurance rating.



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AS TRADER AS A TRADESMAN &
RECOMMEND A 5 STAR
FREE ESTIMATES ON ANY
TYPE OR SIZE OF JOB
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For all your Patio's,
Turfing, Decking,
treework and
Root grinding...

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www.prestwoodfencing
.co.uk for more details

gas fitting

READERS ARE ADVISED
To check that anyone
carrying out any Gas work
is Gas Safe Registered.
It is an offence under the Gas
Safety (Installation and Use)
Regulations 1998 to carry out
gas work in the UK without
being on the Gas Safe Register.

house clearances

**A ABSOLUTE BEST
CASH PRICE PAID**
for house clearances and bereavements.
Also removals undertaken.
All rubbish removed
Carriers licence held
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**ABSOLUTELY
ANYTHING
CLEARED**
FULL OR PART
GARGAES/ SHEDS,
RUBBISH REMOVED
WASTE LICENCE
**01384 486456 /
07711661135**

painters / decorators

LOVE 2 WALLPAPER
Reliable & Friendly, Professional
Female Painter and Decorator
Wallpaper is my speciality, competitive prices.
For the Perfect Finish with minimum hassle.
Painting & Coving Work Undertaken
01384 287577 or 07812 484194

removals

**A1 KINGSWINFOR
REMOVALS & HOUSE
CLEARANCES**
Single items,
Full houses, Offices etc
Recession rates,
FREE QUOTES
**We take the stress away
40 years experience
07966 281957**

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Local
Careful Firm
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flat/house removals/clearances,
local/nationwide. Call Steve 0121
422 2999 or 07815 043724

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Free Quotes, Free boxes,
wrap & tape. With every
removal. Great prices eg.
3 bed from £299.
Cleaning service and Landlord
repair service available
Quick move available 24-7.
Call Lucy on
07805 670549

CALL LINDA NOW: For all your
Removal needs. 07429 453209/
01902 830870 / 01384 940290.

CALL IAN. Man with a large van.
No job too small, no distance too
far. 07973 628534, 01902 891535.

roofing

MG ROOFING Flat roofs, tiling, roof
repairs, fascias and gutters. Call
01602 238969 / 07580 465449.

skip hire

BIG JOHN MOVES RUBBISH!
No Skips, we load, fast friendly
service, 25 Lister Rd, Dudley DY2
8JR, Est 35 years, 01384 232359.

4 Pets & Animals

equestrian corner

ALL READERS are advised to
check if Horses have the required
Passport information.

HAYLAGE round bales, £25. Round
bale hay £15-£25. Can deliver.
01902 840603 or 07836 647754.

guns & dogs

NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS
Advertisers must ensure that
they meet all necessary legal
requirements for owning and
using guns.

pets corner

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All neutered, innoculated
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Call Greyhound Trust
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NOTICE TO READERS
Please be aware that when
purchasing a puppy there are
some simple guidelines you can
follow to ensure that you are not
purchasing from a Puppy
Farmer:

1. Try to ensure you visit the puppy whilst it is still with its Mother.
2. Do not arrange to collect a puppy from any other location than that of the breeder.
3. Ensure that you are given any KC documentation, if pedigree. Whilst Midland News Association publications take great care to avoid publication of advertisements from Puppy Farmers we cannot accept any liability should readers purchase from this kind of establishment.

KIND HOME WANTED FOR LOLA.

We are looking for a forever
home for Lola who is a small 13
month old dark brown Staffie.
She is a typical young Staffie,
full of life and a bit on the hyper-
active aat times when you come
home.

Would benefit being home with
owners who are used to
working with young Staffie
types.

Shes good both on and off lead
and with other dogs.
If interested call Martin
(Dog Samaritans) on
01384 241034.

KIND HOMES WANTED GEO 1 year old handsome black and white Collie

JAKE 1 year old red/white Border
Collie
POPPY 6mth long haired
black/white Border Collie
LUNA 4yr, blue mearle, deaf,
needs another dog
RIGSBY Came in with Luna, 9
year old Beagle
BOB 10yr old, golden labrador
good with Cats, Children and
dogs.
TARKA 10yr old lakeland
terrier type girl
ZIGGI 12yr old male patterdale,
game with Tarka
**01588 676106
www.dogsamaritans.org.uk**

ROSEDENE RESCUE CENTRE

1, Radley Road, Rushall,
Walsall, WS4 1LN.
01922 627013.
Open Monday to Saturday
11am - 5pm.
Sundays - Bank Holidays
11am - 4pm.
Takes in relinquished dogs from
owners, all areas (if they are vet
checked/up to date with jabs.)
Donations of dog food, toys,
bedding and vet bills always
appreciated.
**WE ARE ALSO NOW
AVAILABLE FOR PET
TAXIS**
(No booking necessary).

TIA
BEAUTIFUL STAFFIE GIRL.
Three years old, superb
temperament and very
affectionate.
Tia is excellent with people and
other pets.
Sadly she needs a new
responsible and loving home
due to the death of her owner.
Call 01384 252158.

vets

Express & Star

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BUSINESS

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So could you by
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Advisors on
01902 319191.

5 Business & Farming

business opportunities

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take appropriate professional
advice before entering any obli-
gations.



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FreeAds

*Private advertisers only, no guns, pets, or livestock.
Free adverts are published within 7 days of receipt, in-paper
and online and are limited to 3 lines maximum.

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business directory

accountants

ACCOUNTANCY and Taxation
Services for small business.
Fixed Fees. Call 01902 343200

6 Property

accommodation to let

A TWO BED FLAT off Tettenhall Rd.
CH, DG. Off road parking. £115.50
pw 01902 340073 / 07770 660636.

NOTICE TO READERS It is an
offence under the Accommodation
Agencies Act 1963, for an Agency
to charge a fee simply for the regis-
tration of your requirements and/or
supplying particulars of premises to let.

DUDLEY AREA
nice one bed flat to let,
£110pw.
Including Gas, Electric,
Council tax and Water.
No pets / DSS.
07803 890908.

MERRIDALE ROOM to let. £63pw
inc most bill not to be overlooked!!
DSS ok. Call 07723 016692.

THREE BEDROOM detached
house, in Akeley (WV15), DG, CH,
nice and clean. 07980 208994.

houses for sale

NINE BEDROOMED private house,
Blackpool, by sea, ex B&B.
£90,000. For details call 07515
258118.

overseas property

NOTICE TO READERS
Readers are advised to seek
independent legal advice before
entering into any financial commit-
ments.

properties wanted

CASH NOW**WE CAN BEAT ANY PRICE**

- Legal fees paid
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we can buy your house in

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wolverhampton properties

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FREE up to the value
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*T&Cs apply



Classified Ads

nursing & carers

CARER WANTED for physically disabled lady to aid independent living in Kinner. To work 24 hour sleep-in shift per week on rota. Duties: personal / domestic. Driver essential. Good rate of pay. Please ring 01384 872477

8

Motoring

cars over £1500

AUDI A4 18T 2003, low mileage for year, service history, MoT'd, immaculate condition inside and out. £2,000 ono. 01902 829872.**SELLING YOUR CAR?**

We have a package to suit every budget.

Packages start from as little as

£21.00 for 6 nights

Plus 6 nights free if you do not sell.

CALL

01902 317878**LEXUS 450 Hybrid**, 56, 06, 1 owner from new, fully serviced, full MoT, excellent throughout, £5,250 ono. 07794 450416. 01902 851560.**MAZDA 3 2TS**, 5 door, hatch, 2005, 57,000 miles, titanium grey, air con, long MoT, alloys, stereo, CD, excellent condition. £2,530 ono. 01384 401209.**VAUXHALL INSIGNIA ELITE**

2014, 30k, auto, Est. 2.0CDTI 195bhp bi-turbo, dealer fsh, warranty. HTD electric mem seats, privacy, Sat Nav, DAB, electric tailgate, 19ins alloys. BiXenon LED, rain lights, sensors, immaculate.

£14,500.

07971 365912.

AUTOMATIC**VW GOLF DIESEL** AUTOMATIC MARK 4 5-dr, cheap to run, excellent condition any trial.

£1,650

07800 637961.

cars under £1500

ADVERTISERS ARE REMINDED

that the Business Advertisements (Disclosure) Order of 1977 requires that advertisements must clearly differentiate between Private and Trade.

FIAT PUNTO 1.2, 2002, 7 months MoT, Immaculate, 74,000 miles, lady owner. £425. 07852 691074.**FIAT PUNTO Dynamic**, 1.2, 04 reg., f.s.h. full MoT, blue, lovely condition. £375 ono. 01384 440258 / 07935 337167.**FORD FOCUS LX W** reg. 5dr, 1790cc, petrol, black six months MoT. £425. 07512 044868.**FORD MONDEO** 2005 2.2TDCi, non runner, spares or repairs, MoT, leather seats, alloys etc £250ono. 07867 950431.**MERCEDES 190E**, 1.8 auto, MoT till October 2016, no rust, good condition, £575 ono. 07594 083848.**PEUGEOT 307cc** Coupe Convertible, petrol, 1997, silver, Genuine sale. £795. 07855 239094**RENAULT CLIO 2006**, Blue, abs, air bag, air con, central locking, £995. 0752464945.**RENAULT MODUS 1.5DCI** PRIVILEGE

2006, 06 reg, 3 owners, 108,000 miles, FSH, 11 mths MoT, 55mpg, good tyres all round, recent service & MoT, £1,295.

01902 753118. 07775 901378.**ROVER 100** 1998, 30,000 miles, nice condition, £350. 01902 330905.**TOYOTA RAV 4 XT3** VVTi 2.0 Petrol, 54 plate, silver, MoT Nov 16, nice condition. £1,250. 01902 408213 or 07889 40 6676.**VAUXHALL ASTRA BREEZE**, 2009, 56,200 miles, silver, abs, full MoT, one previous owner, 5 door, alloys, very good condition, £1,499 ono. 07878 403302.**VOLKSWAGEN GOLF 1.4S**, 02 reg, fsh, 64,000 miles from new, MoT'd till August 2016, £750. 07885 772238.**VW POLO** 51 plate, 1.9 TDI, silver, 161k miles, diesel, MoT Aug 2016. £400. 07930 374986.

classic cars

JAGUAR XJS 4.0 1991. Only 66,000 miles. Light metallic blue. Sports auto box. Heated leather seats. SH, 10 months MoT. Good condition for year. £3,500 ono.**07904 662468 (Bridgnorth).****V W SCIROCCO** 1991, 1 owner, metallic grey, MoT July, FSH, £2000. ono. 07866 410286.**WANTED, CLASSIC CARS.** Private cash buyer. Instant cash settlement. Any age. Any condition. 01630 652993 or 07773 462797.

driving tuition

**Homer's** Mini, Clio, Corsa, Fiesta, Punto, 207, KA, Fiat 500, Yaris.**10 Hours £89 Five Hours £50! 2 Hours £20! All Areas Covered****MALE & FEMALE INSTRUCTORS** MANUAL & AUTOMATIC

AD/POI REQUIRED. Gift vouchers available for £10

07970 200066 / 01562 870050**01384 234954 / 0121 5640090****01902 580065**

www.homersdrivingschool.co.uk

motorbikes

MOTORCYCLE TRAILERS for sale, 1 bike trailer at £110 and the other bike trailer at £125. Both tow well. 01902 741598.

scrap vehicles

OUR ADVERTISERS are reminded that it is an offence under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 to buy scrap cars/metal for cash.

MCB TOP PRICES PAID FOR ALL SCRAP CARS, VANS, BIKES, CLASSICS**Tel: 01902 408176**

1000's of parts available at all times

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A BETTER PRICE for scrap or damaged cars and commercials. Spares for sale.

NINE LOCKS VEHICLE DISMANTLERS LTD**Brierley Hill 01384 76566 or 70553. Evenings 75397. DY5 3JZ.**

vehicles wanted

alan reed cars

Used cars wanted for cash Top prices paid. HP settled. Buyer could call.

01562 711083 / 07831 245313**CROWN MOTORS** guarantee best price for your unwanted cars/vans. 07903 549849, 01902 597035.

spares & accessories

clutches / brakes / gearboxes**A CLUTCH CHANGE MOBILE****30 yrs experience**

ALL AREAS COVERED

Call Bob

01384 251328 or 07972 169554 anytime

For Example:

Citroen C1, C2, C3**Hyundai 110****Toyota Yaris****Clios & Micras**

Ring for quotes on others!

mobile mechanics

MOBILE MECHANICS Service & repairs. Headgasket, clutches and cambelts. 07747 848469.

9 Local Information

public & legal notices

**ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 - SECTION 14(1)(a) THE M5 MOTORWAY (JUNCTIONS 4-3) (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) ORDER 2016**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Highways England Company Limited (Company No. 9346363) intends to make an Order on the M5 Motorway, in the Metropolitan Borough of Dudley and in the County of Worcestershire, to allow carriageway repairs to be carried out.

The effect of the Order will be to close:-

- (1) the northbound carriageway of the M5 from its junction from the exit slip road at Junction 4 to its junction with the entry slip road at Junction 3; and
- (2) the slip road leading to the northbound carriageway of the M5 at Junction 4.

The work will be carried out over one night between 22:00 hours and 05:00 hours and is expected to start on Tuesday 2 February 2016. The Order will come into force on 29 January 2016.

Vehicles being used for police, fire brigade or ambulance purposes and vehicles being used in connection with the works, or by a traffic officer, will be exempt from the closures.

A diversion route via the A491 and the A456 will be signed.

For further information, please contact Matthew Taylor on 0121 687 2550.

Karen Eustace, an officer in Highways England Company Limited.

Highways England Company Limited (Company No. 9346363) registered office: Bridge House, Walnut Tree Close, Guildford, GU1 4LZ. A Company registered in England and Wales.

LEGAL / PUBLIC NOTICES

For convenience you may fax any advertising requirements to

Marie Hogg on 01902 713146or email **marie.hogg@expressandstar.co.uk**

(remember to include a name/contact number for confirmation of receipt)

10 Personals

personal

A VERY SINCERE LOVING MAN

60 WLTM female for friendship or relationship.

Box Number P20188, Express and Star, Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.**ARE YOU A FEMALE**

Whose looking for unconditional love between 30-50 years old (strictly) able to begin a long term, loving, sincere, loyal relationship.

Educated, totally single, reasonable looking female, accepting me for what I am, right age guarantees reply.

Box Number P20185, Express and Star, Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.**AT MANYANA** Gentlemans Club, 5* customer rated Mon-Fri 10-9pm. Sat-Sun: 10-11pm. 0121 472 7281.**ATTRACTIVE, BLONDE LADY, 45**

5ft 4in, slim figure, N/S, professional, no ties, car owner, likes travel, cinema, walking, dining out, weekends away. Seeks attractive male, 5ft 10in and over, professional, N/S, car owner, for Friendship / Relationship. Photo please, will return.

Box Number P20182, Express and Star, Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.**HI, I'M ADRIAN**

I am 44 and looking for a lady 30-44, for friendship / relationship. I enjoy music, cinema, days out / in. Own flat, GSOF. Photo appreciated (returned)

Box Number P20180, Express and Star, Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.**WIDOWER**

Gentleman, fit and active, loves music and dancing, holidays in this country or abroad, many interests, well dressed, own house and car, very caring and loving to the right person.

Box Number P20189, Express and Star, Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.**general****HAVE YOU CHECKED** your advertisement today? We would respectfully remind advertisers that it is their responsibility to inform the publishers of any mistakes or inaccuracies on the first day of publication.

NORMAN DONALD STUBBS (Deceased)

Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 any persons having a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the aforementioned deceased, late of 13 Chalfont Place Stourbridge West Midlands DY9 9EP, who died on 29/12/2013, are required to send particulars thereof in writing to the undersigned on or before 24/03/2016, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to claims and interests of which they have had notice.

APS LEGAL & ASSOCIATES

White Hart Yard Bridge Street Workshop Nottinghamshire S60 148080

SELL IT FAST SELL IT LOCAL**HERE'S WHAT SOME OF OUR CUSTOMERS SAY***"The advert started on the Friday, sold on the Saturday!"*

Mr Betteley of Stafford

sold his Land Rover

Discovery using the 6

night Repeat for Free

Package

"Sold quickly which was great"

Mrs Burnside of

Essington sold her

Coachman Amara

Caravan using the 3

night Repeat for Free

Package

"I had to take advantage of the free repeats part of the package but it's still great that I sold the car"

Mr Brown of Bilston sold

his Renault Clio using

the 6 night Repeat for

Free Package

ONLY

£19.50 FOR 6 NIGHTS

PLUS

6 nights Free if you do not sell!

Includes one week online

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TELEPHONE - 01902 317878**ON LINE - www.expressandstar.com/boonad****IN PERSON - At your local Express & Star office**

*SOURCE: Jicrag 01.10.2012. Private advertisers only.

Buy Local, Sell Local 01902 317878

Classified Ads



Here's how to use your dating service ...

Place your advert call: **0844 381 5936** and follow the simple instructions

To **Place** your ad by text Simply text **REG** followed by your first name, date of birth, area and your advert (max 155 characters) and send to **80098** FREE Standard Network rates apply.

To **Reply** to members from your landline call:

0906 500 3955 calls cost £1.55 per min plus your phone company's access charge.

Have the adverts 6-digit box no written down and do **key-it-in promptly** when asked. Don't forget to leave contact details for replies.

Or **Text...** **REPLY26** (leave space) box number (leave space) and then enter your message & send to **80098** eg: **REPLY26 123456 hi get in touch...** then send to **80098** Successfully forwarded messages cost £1.50 per message (Max 160 characters). You must exchange 7 messages each before you can swap contact details. Messages may be moderated for your safety and security.

Date **ONLINE**

YOU can now date online or via your **mobile**

Simply **visit** us at:

http://dating.expressandstar.com



Dates in **YOUR** region

Been left a message? **Pickup** your replies:

0906 500 3957

calls cost £1.55 per min plus your phone company's access charge.

THE biggest UK on-line database of 17 million UK REAL users waiting to meet **you.. visit..** **http://dating.expressandstar.com**

Women seeking men

REMEMBER: Calls cost £1.55 per minute plus your phone company's access charge. Texts cost £1.50 per message received.

CHRIS, 40, attractive slim sophisticated redhead, seeking male 30-50s to relax with and get to know. Discretion assured. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 420491** §

KATIE 35yrs, slender well educated brunette seeks no strings mutual pleasure with gent 40+ Must be discreet, married or single. AKA: Tel: **0906 515 3003 Box 419673** §

SALLY, 46, slim attractive feisty redhead, intelligent, easygoing, WLTm similar male for friendship and more, looks unimportant. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 420475** §

DISCREET man wanted by married lady for no strings fun. I'm called Sarah and am 37yrs. Pls call, AKA. Tel No: **0906 515 3007 Box 418167** §

LOUISE, 47, youthful looking female looking for spontaneous male to put some love and lust back into life. Call me. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 420445** §

JANE, young 41, very broadminded seeks chap any age for discreet no strings fun, any age, no time wasters AKA. Tel No: **0906 515 3011 Box: 409715** §

ALEXA 49 - slim, attractive, long-haired slim loving female, with many interests including dining out, the arts, photography WLTm similar male. Text only to Mailbox no: **5345662** §

MAUREEN, discreet sensual lady, 42yrs seeks daytime fun at her home. AKA. Tel: **0906 515 3015 Box: 405297** §

YVONNE, single mum, happy with life, but would like to meet someone to share fun times with. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 420269** §

SOPHIA young 40yrs, married but bored, seeks discreet adult fun, any area, all calls answered. Tel: **0906 515 3019 Box: 413399** §

CHLOE pretty single female 36yrs, dark hair/eyes, slim build, very lonely and looking for reliable discreet male for mutual companionship maybe more. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 420359** §

FELICITY, 38yrs, attractive, petite but shapely lady seeks gent for indoor activities! Age/looks/marital status unimportant but must be discreet and non demanding. Tel: **0906 515 3023 Box 420235** §

JULIE, 47, blonde brown eyes, size 12, seeks interests, loves cuddling, kissing and showing affection, seeks similar energetic male friend for TLC. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 420357** §

LOUISE, pretty headresser, works long hours, finds it hard to make a boyfriend, 34yrs, own flat. Text only to Mailbox no: **4192572** §

ANN, 38, very attractive female, N/S, positive attitude to life, WLTm similar kind male with a lot of get up and go for romance and fun times. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 420355** §

JENNI, single mum seeks single dad, own home, can accommodate and loves spoiling her man. Text only to Mailbox no: **4115108** §

JACKIE lonely and looking for male company, 48-65. Need a bit of love and affection? Then I'm your girl. call me. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 418169** §

SARAH, curvaceous brunette, 35, passionate nature, solvent, OHAC, WLTm date and night, looking for male to take me out. Looks/Age/unimportant. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 420207** §

LYN, 43, divorced very lonely single mum, young looking, slim, attractive, WLTm similar male for companionship. Age/looks/Status unimportant. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 418705** §

JANE, 47, voluptuous female, long hair, brown eyes, generous curves, would love to spend cosy nights in with that special male. Age/looks unimportant. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 417341** §

SUSANNAH, 48, curvy female, romantic, warm and cuddly, seeks similar kind male for a loving relationship with lots of cuddles and kisses. Looks unimportant. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 417341** §

CUSTOMER SUPPORT

Call 0207 720 7130 Monday - Friday 10am - 4pm or email us at support@jmediauk.co.uk

LUCY, 32, blonde, tall and slim, looking for a casual fling, nothing serious. Discretion needed and assured. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 420237** §

KELLY young attractive vivacious 48yr old lady, loves good food, cosy nights in/out, and get to know. Discretion assured. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 420195** §

CATHY, 42, good looking brunette with a real passion for life, seeking male for happy times, dates, chats, romance and more. Pls call. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 420175** §

TARA 22 tall slim but curvy with legs that go all the way up to heaven, WLTm very appreciative confident male for adult fun. Contact me anytime. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 414701** §

FEMALE, dark haired 5'10, curvy, likes reading, walking, cinema, seeks male 40-50 for lasting relationship. Text only to Mailbox no: **5077545** §

PROFESSIONAL black female age 50, enjoys evenings and days out, would like to meet similar Midlands male. Text only to Mailbox no: **5315601** §

CATHY, 42, good looking brunette with a real passion for life, seeking male for happy times, dates, chats, romance and more. Pls call. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 420073** §

FEMALE fun brunette, attractive, 26, seeking male for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 416287** §

MAGGIE, 72 yrs young, good sense of humour, well presented, WLTm kind, sincere chappie to share coffee and a chat. Text only to Mailbox no: **5310040** §

LOUISE 35, dark hair, blue eyes, attractive ex-hotel waitress, looking for fun times with older male for romantic nights in and more. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 420043** §



39 yr old independent single Mom, knows the benefit of having a good man in the picture. Text only to Mailbox no: **5084796** §

FRANCES, 45, busty female, loves nights in/out, seeking uncomplicated male who can occupy my free time for quality companionship. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 420003** §

FEMALE, seeks fun loving male who likes a drink and a laugh, to enjoy erotic experiences with a curvy brunette. Discretion guaranteed. Text only to Mailbox no: **5079311** §

MARY, pretty, friendly, lots of fun, lives in Kidderminster, loves the theatre, opera, ballet, WLTm a lovely, charming, funny, genuine guy, 30s, to settle down with. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 419883** §

LOU, 45, lives in Shrewsbury, WLTm a lady between 42-49 with blue eyes, must be kind, caring and funny to mend my broken heart, someone who likes to curl up on the sofa for cosy nights in. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 419855** §

FREYA 24yr old single mum, looking for male for free time frolics, call me if you're interested, it could be fun! Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 419851** §

WIDOW 50, blonde hair, GSOH, 5ft 5ins, slim, seeks male. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 415767** §

JOANNA, 36, petite, auburn haired female, lovely figure seeks loving older male for fun nights out and cosy nights in. Maybe more. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 419595** §

SHARON 32, attractive black single mum of one, very tactile and passionate, WLTm male 45-65yrs for fun meets. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 419579** §

MARIE, 43, fun blue-eyed brunette, fit and active, seeks similar male to have a laugh with. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 419417** §

KAREN 50, widow, likes swimming, horse riding, keep fit, cpiel pigeon shooting. GSOH N/S, non drinker, seeks male. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 415211** §

CURVY, farm girl at heart, 32, 5ft 10, single mum, caring, kind, shy, likes walks, cooking WLTm tactile male farmer for LTR. Text only to Mailbox no: **5067001** §

FEMALE medium build, blonde hair, 5ft 5ins, seeks male, 50-58, GSOH, loving, caring and understanding. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 415429** §

MARIE, 43, fun blue-eyed brunette, fit and active, seeks similar male to have a laugh with. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 419417** §

FEMALE 50's, 5ft 5ins, blonde hair, blue eyes, slim, seeks gent with GSOH, loving, caring and understanding. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 415871** §

BLUE eyed female, blonde hair, slim, GSOH, loving, caring, understanding, seeking similar male, 55-55. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 416989** §

AMANDA, 36, tall, slim, busty brunette seeks man, any age, any area, for discreet daytime fun. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 418117** §

CAROL Ann, sensitive slim brunette very romantic seeks tall handsome male for fun, friendship and lots of TLC. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 419385** §

KIRSTEN, 36, attractive, blonde and very bored, seeking open-minded decent male for fun/friendship, 40-60yrs. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 419383** §

VAL 41, pretty, cuddly, flirt, seeks similar fun loving male for an uncomplicated no strings relationship. Age/looks unimportant. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 416601** §

MID naughty forties female looking fun, thrills and discreet meets, give me a call, you won't be disappointed. Any age with own accommodation. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 409109** §

DIVORCED female, attractive, sensual by nature, OHAC, bored with own company, looking to make life a little more exciting with likeminded man. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 419219** §

LINDA, 47, brown-eyed blonde, caring, honest, many interests, seeks genuine male to share lovely evenings with. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 417211** §

JOYCE, affectionate sensitive widow, bit of a romantic, seeks loving male for lots of TLC. Looks unimportant, it's what's in the heart that matters. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 419143** §

DEBBIE, 29, looking for mature professional fun guy, 40-50 to spend good times with. Call me, you have nothing to lose. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 419075** §

JULES, sensitive tactile, curvy brunette, hopeless romantic, seeks tall, loving male for fun, friendship and possible LTR. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 419033** §

VIRGINIA, outgoing social female, 24, tall slim and attractive, looking for fun times, maybe more. Can accommodate/travel. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 418845** §

HEATHER, well travelled solvent brunette looking to share a large glass of wine and whatever follows with affectionate man friend. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 419031** §

LADY young at heart, nice eyes, seeks men 42-52 with good sense of humour. Text only to Mailbox No: **4881572** §

VIRGINIA, outgoing social female, 24, tall slim and attractive, looking for fun times, maybe more. Can accommodate/travel. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 418845** §

LOOKING for the right chemistry with country loving gent who like me is looking for some extra fun in their life. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 418843** §

JAN 35yr old blue eyed blonde, outgoing, friendly, WLTm passionate guy to share good wine, good conversation, flirting and fun times. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 418609** §

ATTRACTIVE professional lady, widow, 50's, likes walks, sight seeing, theatre, meals out, seeks genuine, professional gent, 5ft 6ins plus to make life more enjoyable. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 418615** §

JAN 35yr old blue eyed blonde, outgoing, friendly, WLTm passionate guy to share good wine, good conversation, flirting and fun times. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 418609** §

SENSUAL tactile, attractive female, long blonde hair, blue eyes, loves travel, wine/dining, WLTm genuine male for mutual companionship. Looks unimportant. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 418587** §

BROKEN hearted lady 39 seeks loving male to mend heart age 39/40. Text only to Mailbox No: **4869116** §

KAY, very young 45, fit and active, no ties, seeks similar young at heart, fun male for fun times. Age/Status/looks unimportant. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 418571** §

VIVACIOUS strawberry blonde who knows just what she wants, looking for caring male for spontaneous fun relationship. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 418445** §

WENDY, 40, slim, fit, bubbly female looking to meet a tall, slim, fit, mature male who thinks he can keep up. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 418369** §

JO 55, curvy red head, loves eating out, theatre, travel, looking for middle-aged prince charming to sweep me off my feet. Text only to Mailbox No: **4464995** §

FEMALE fun brunette, attractive, 26, seeking male for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 416287** §

GENUINE lady looking for genuine male, age 58-60, for friendship and to have a laugh with. So if that's you would love to hear from you. Text only to Mailbox No: **4537136** §

PAT 66, attractive, N/S, likes reading, nights seeking gent for friendship, days out and more. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 418277** §

68YR old widow, attractive, seeks sincere, N/S male, likes reading, meals out and walks. West Midlands. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 414773** §

WENDY, 40, slim, fit, bubbly female looking to meet a tall, slim, fit, mature male who thinks he can keep up. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 418369** §

EILEEN, slim green eyed brunette likes meals out and cosy nights in, seeks tall male who would make her laugh and brighten up her day. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 418347** §

FEMALE seeking gent 55-70, down to earth, nice and intelligent who knows how to treat a lady. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 417195** §

YOUNG early 40's female, GSOH, kind, caring, considerate, seeks male for friendship, possible romance. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 410847** §

CAROL, 49, attractive, green eyed blonde, nervous warm hearted, n/s with GSOH likes cinema, music, walking, meals out and travel seeking similar male. Text only to Mailbox No: **4283683** §

DEBBIE, 29, looking for mature professional fun guy, 40-50 to spend good times with. Call me, you have nothing to lose. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 419075** §

JULES, sensitive tactile, curvy brunette, hopeless romantic, seeks tall, loving male for fun, friendship and possible LTR. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 419033** §

VIRGINIA, outgoing social female, 24, tall slim and attractive, looking for fun times, maybe more. Can accommodate/travel. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 418845** §

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JAN 35yr old blue eyed blonde, outgoing, friendly, WLTm passionate guy to share good wine, good conversation, flirting and fun times. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 418609** §

ATTRACTIVE professional lady, widow, 50's, likes walks, sight seeing, theatre, meals out, seeks genuine, professional gent, 5ft 6ins plus to make life more enjoyable. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 418615** §

JAN 35yr old blue eyed blonde, outgoing, friendly, WLTm passionate guy to share good wine, good conversation, flirting and fun times. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 418609** §

VERY useful, attractive 58 yr old, GSOH, six foot tall, nice build, n/s, genuine, tactile, fit and sporty, looking for a women for nights in and out. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 420135** §

COLIN 61, lorry driver, 5'10", blue eyes, kind headed, romantic, hobbies include growing luchsia's for showing and I have a vintage tractor that I play with from time to time. Looking for similar to travel and enjoy the good things in life with. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 418463** §

HANDSOME guy, 40, seeks attractive, younger female for fun times. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 316752** §

TALL dark, good looking male, 53, seeks attractive female for daytime fun and exciting times. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 401875** §

TALL, dark, slim, attractive guy, 48, seeks attractive female for no strings fun times. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 299904** §

ATTRACTIVE male, late 40's, seeks attractive female for fun times. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 311713** §

TALL, dark, attractive guy 50, seeks attractive, tactile female for fun, excitement and lots of attention. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 314219** §

SHROPSHIRE male, 50, tall, dark, attractive, fun loving, seeks attractive female for fun and excitement. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 341387** §

TALL attractive Shrewsbury male, 54, seeks attractive female for fun and excitement in the daytime. Discretion assured. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 411823** §

COLIN 48, seeks cuddly large big beautiful woman 45 to 55 for LTR, love, romance, hopefully likes cuddles, kisses, holding hands. Text only to Mailbox no: **5308886** §

52YRS old guy genuine down to earth looking for Mrs right for nights in and out, walking, cooking, lives life to the full. Text only to Mailbox no: **5332115** §

WIDOWER 70 plus, seeking female for friendship. Love me and my dog. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 417439** §

REMEMBER: Calls cost £1.55 per minute plus your phone company's access charge. Texts cost £1.50 per message received.

MALE looking to meet a nice lady for fun times to spend with, I am 72 and would like to meet a lady between 60-70. Text only to Mailbox no: **5332896** §

PHILLIP, 29 years old, 5ft 11ins, stocky build, green eyes, friendly, GSOH, seeks genuine friendly n/s female for friendship, possible relationship. Text only to Mailbox no: **5335424** §

PHIL, 58, slim, OHAC, from Wolverhampton, looking for a fun lady for a no-strings relationship. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 420265** §

GENUINE 56yr old male, divorced, OHAC, looking for nice lady for friendship, maybe more. Wolverhampton. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 405551** §

CARING male, 57, OHAC, looking for female, any race, status and age for no strings discreet fun. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 411461** §

Who's caught your eye? **WINK 26** - 80098

STEVE 39, 5ft 9ins, medium build, likes walks, seeks female, slim-medium build, single mum welcome. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 396709** §

PHIL 55, divorced, 5ft 10ins, slim, OHAC, seeks female, plus for discreet adult fun. Tel No: **0906 500 3955 Box No: 401875** §

GENU

Visitors must delve deep to claim bonus point victory

Walsall 22 DK 29

DK were surprised at the good condition of the Delves Road pitch. However, if the rain that started just after full time had been during the game things may well have been different.

A Duncan Tompkins penalty gave DK and early 3-0 lead.

Walsall benefited from two DK handling errors to bag two tries and go into the break 12-3 to the good.

Not for the first time this season there must have been some wise words at half time, for in the third quarter of the game DK raised their game and in effect took it away from Walsall.

The first significant attack of the second half saw James Fildes set up for a try that Tompkins converted.

Moments later DK were back in the same corner. This time the ball had been shipped to TJ Gordon on the wing who made good ground towards the line. He passed back inside to Shillingford who drove for the line, but was stopped inches short. However, Tompkins was running a great support line to take the pop pass and go in for the try.

The third quarter of the game was finished off by a try for Shillingford, with the extras added by Tompkins. DK were in full control and searching for the bonus point, but were hit by a breakaway try.

DK were pressing for the bonus point and it duly arrived when Shillingford touched down for his second try, Tompkins adding the extras.

Walsall's efforts were rewarded at the end with two bonus points from another breakaway try.

Old Hales in uphill battle after injuries

Old Northamptonians 28 Old Halesonians 21

THIS was on paper a five-point win for the visitors, but someone forgot to tell the hosts. After an early Sam Jones try, converted by Chris Hooper, Hales were hit by injuries and by Matt Young's red card.

Old Northamptonians responded with a penalty, a converted try and another try before a converted Luke Smith effort. Hales then faced an uphill battle second half, and a converted try gave the hosts a 22-14 lead, extended by two penalties.

A serious injury to a home player resulted in a stoppage and an ambulance called. The game continued on an adjoining pitch and a converted Smith try reduced the arrears.

The 2nds won 48-12 at Kidderminster but the 3rds went down 38-0 at Clee Hill 2nds.

Safety from drop almost secured

THE second half of the season started for Stourbridge Chess Club on Monday when Wolverhampton visited for a match in Wolverhampton division 2.

It would be a tough match for Stourbridge as Wolverhampton currently held the division with a perfect played five won five record to Stourbridge.

Wolverhampton were missing a couple of their top players but still outgraded the Stourbridge second team across all the boards. Stourbridge were also fielding two reserves.

In the end though, the match result was a 3-3 draw with wins for Julie Wilson and Colin Woodall. Stourbridge came close to winning the match with Dave Scriven battling to draw in a pawn down end-

game. Unfortunately in severe time trouble he was unable to hold it and lost.

Wednesday night was Stourbridge v Halesowen over 10 boards. Stourbridge fielded a team of four youngsters in Dudley division 3.

The fact the team's combined age is 50 is far more important and encouraging than the actual result, a spirited 4-0 loss.

Weakened

In the Birmingham division 1 match Stourbridge had to field a weakened team, whereas Halesowen had their first choice top team. SCC were all outgraded by about 50 points each and came out on

the wrong side of a 4-2 result. The week ended with the Wolverhampton league division 2 team playing again, this time away at Walsall Kipping. Although missing two players SCC still out graded their opponents by 15-20 points across most boards and this time they won 4-2.

With three points from the week SCC are now on the verge of being safe in division 2, with six points from six matches. Another two points should remove any lingering doubts.

Anyone interested in playing chess in 2016 is asked to contact Dave Scriven on 01384 423642 for more information about the club. Or visit www.stourbridgechess.f9.co.uk

Baizing a trail in the snooker world

TONY Kidd has chalked up some notable successes during his lengthy association with the Stourbridge Snooker League.

Two over-45 individual titles and a victory over three-time world champion John Spencer, just after he had lost the 1972 final to Alex Higgins, are among the highlights.

The league was formed just after the Second World War and today boasts three divisions with sides playing on Wednesday and Thursday nights.

Kidd's parents were steward and stewardess of Stourbridge Conservative Club and that's where he caught the snooker bug.

He played for the club until it closed in 2004 and then moved to Kinver Constitutional Club before joining Pockets Snooker Club in Kidderminster, which he still represents in the Premier Division.

Kidd, aged 67, is also well-known and respected for his sterling work off the baize. He became match secretary in 1974 and then secretary and treasurer but after 40 years' service he is keen to highlight the key roles played by others.

Stalwarts

Kidd forms the current committee alongside fellow league stalwarts, chairman Sam Harrison, president Mike Pritchard and match secretary Kevin Franklin, and they have kept the ball rolling over the years.

"Gradually we have lost a number of teams as various social clubs and working men's clubs have closed down," he said.

"We used to have 64 teams at our peak and now we have 33 playing across three divisions. We could do with a few extra teams and it would be nice to have three divisions of 14 sides.

"But the league is well-run and still looking pretty healthy," he said. "The standard is still very high.

"We haven't had a century break so far this season, but it's just a matter of time."

Kidd has rubbed shoulders with some of the game's greats over the years including the legendary Alex 'Hurricane' Higgins.

"I remember Alex Higgins doing an exhibition at Stourbridge Conservative Club," said Kidd. "It was in 1972 and a week before he beat John Spencer to win the world title for the first time



Long-serving Stourbridge Snooker League representative Tony Kidd

at Selly Oak British Legion in Birmingham. I had to show him around. He turned up at the club, knocked on the door and I had to show him to his hotel, The Bell in Stourbridge. One of our local players, Barry Roscoe, managed to beat him as well."

One of Kidd's proudest moments came courtesy of Higgins a little while later.

"We booked Alex for another exhibition after he won the title, but he didn't show up. Fortunately John

Spencer offered to come along and play for free, which was really good of him. I managed to beat him, but I did apologise to him because people had come along to see him play and not me.

"Doug Mountjoy, Rex Williams, Ray Reardon and John Pullman have all played exhibition games down the years, but that was in the days when it cost £80 for the player and you could charge £1 entrance and get 100 people watching."

Norton title bid boosted as the points are pocketed

NORTON Social A took another positive step towards retaining their Premier Division championship in the Stourbridge Snooker League with a 4-1 victory over Pockets SC A.

Andy Smith, Steve Mason, Ashley Aston and Rob Pitt all won for the hosts. Tom Pepperall bagged a consolation frame for Pockets with the aid of a 40 break.

West Midlands Police slipped up 3-2 at home to Hotshots SC B, while Brandhall Labour are second after a 4-1 win at Moor Pool & Snooker A.

After six successive wins, First Division leaders Kinver Constitutional B lost 3-2 defeat at Stourbridge Inst A.

Kinver's closest rivals, Kingswinford Cons A couldn't take advantage, however, as they lost a predictably tight match against their own B team, who eased into second place.

Second Division leaders Stourbridge Old Edwardians extended their advantage to five points with a 4-1 success at struggling Stourbridge Inst D.

The two Amblecote Royal British Legion teams remain second and third after battling to beat the two Kingswinford Cons' teams.

Results - Premier Division: West Midlands Police 2 Hotshots SC B 3 ; Norton Social A 4 ; Pockets SC A 1; Moor Pool & Snooker A 1 Brandhall Labour 4 ; Pockets SC B 3 Amblecote Institute A 2; Baggeridge Social & Hotshots SC A byes.

First Division: Moor Pool & Snooker B 3 Moor Pool & Snooker C 2; Stourbridge Inst A 3 Kinver Const B 2; Amblecote Inst B 2 Kinver Const C 3 ; Kingswinford Cons B 3 Kingswinford Cons B 2; Wombourne 3 Norton Social B 2; Kinver Const A 4 Stourbridge Inst B 1.

Second Division: Kingswinford Cons D 2 Amblecote RBL A 3; Amblecote RBL B 3 Kingswinford Cons C 2; Stourbridge Inst D 1 Old Edwardians 4; Amblecote Inst D 2 Amblecote Inst C 3; Kinver Const D 3 Stourbridge Inst C 2.

Former clubs pay tribute to old boy Percy

PERCY FREEMAN, who made a dream move from the West Midlands League to the top flight of English football, has died at the age of 70.

The striker – born in Newark on July 4, 1945 – played for Stourbridge before being snapped up by Albion in 1968. Although he made just three Baggies appearances in the 1969/70 season he went on to become a legend at Lincoln City.

He scored 14 times in his first season with the Imps, securing an £11,500 move to Reading, but ended up back at Sincil Bank under Graham Taylor.

There he enjoyed his greatest moment, helping Lincoln lift the Fourth Division title in 1975/76 with 23 goals in 35 appearances.

Albion and the Glassboys paid tribute to Freeman on Twitter.

Final whistle

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Foster waits on Staffs vest confirmation

IT may have been the FA Cup third round weekend for footballers but it was County Championships weekend for runners on Saturday as a small group from Dudley Kingswinford Running Club took part in their regional competitions.

With eligibility requirements decided by birth or residency there were a few options to consider and qualification rules to take into account with the prize of representing their county, if placing high enough in their race, the added incentive.

Those going down the residency route competed in the Staffordshire Championships at Sandwell Valley with Ben Foster finishing in 12th place in 36.50 and awaiting confirmation that this will be enough to secure his first Staffs vest in the Inter Counties Championships in Birmingham in March.

Injury

Matt Biggs finished in 31st in 40.09 claiming some notable scalps in the process. Unfortunately the third runner of the trio, James Wright, was forced to pull out during the race due to injury.

Elsewhere Dave Norman played the county of birth card to compete in the Shropshire Championships at Attingham Park near Shrewsbury.

Over a near seven-mile course covering multiple laps of increasingly muddy parkland he was able to finish in 59th place in 46.53 despite freezing cold rain mid race making conditions particularly unpleasant.

Enville fall short as Hagley off to a winning start

DUE to a late withdrawal prior to starter's orders, the WCB Indoor cricket league is reduced to seven at Kinver and for the first week of the competition - which runs through to the end of March - only one match was scheduled.

In the event Hagley (119-5) got off to a winning start against Envile 'B' (104) by 15 runs, but not without some difficulty with Envile 'B' gathering hope for their season.

Hagley won the toss and batted first - a little rustiness was shown by both sides as the Hagley openers Joe Lennon and John McDonnell managed to sort themselves out and come to terms with the pace of the game. Lennon retired on 25 quickly followed by McDonnell.

Captain Paul Morgan was run out without facing, the remaining Hagley batsmen adding to the score whilst being restrained by the young Envile bowlers.

James Russell also contributed a useful 26 to Hagley's reasonable total of 119.

Envile openers Jono Howells (20) and Matt Grainger (25 no) got the innings off to a flyer, only losing the first wicket at 66. On Grainger's retirement, captain Greg Tomkins and young Tom Davis tried to keep the total going but thanks to some wayward Hagley bowling, producing a number of wides, Envile were unable to capitalise and ended 15 short.

Skipper Dale puts Yeltz on the spot

Halesowen Town 0 Blyth Spartans 1

HALESOWEN lost out to a second-half penalty from Blyth captain Robbie Dale but matched the league leaders for work-rate in manager John Hill's 150th league game in charge.

The Yeltz suffered an early blow when right-wing outlet Ashley Parsons-Smith limped out of game after just 12 minutes and neither side registered a shot on target in the first half, although Halesowen's Kaiman Anderson blasted just high and home substitute Mike Turner glanced a header wide.

The league leaders visibly moved up a gear after the interval and home goalkeeper Shaun

Halesowen Town

Rowley saved a long range free-kick from Dale before gathering a curling effort from Michael Richardson in the heavy rain.

Captain Dale then smashed home Blyth's winner from the penalty spot in the 66th minute after he had his legs clipped by Jay Denny.

Visiting goalkeeper Adam McHugh was called upon to tip a dangerous 70th minute free-kick from Aaron Griffiths over the bar as Halesowen responded.

However, the Spartans almost increased their

lead in the 77th minute when Richardson worked clear on goal but Rowley made a fine save and seconds later Rowley touched a blistering shot from substitute Paul Robinson onto his crossbar.

Halesowen's best chance finally came in the 90th minute when full-back Luke Connolly cut in from his right and his curling shot hit the top of the bar with Blyth goalkeeper McHugh rooted to the spot.

Halesowen Town: Rowley; Connolly, Griffiths, Denny (c), Hull, Parsons-Smith (Turner 12), Charlton, Bragoli (Forsyth 79), Anderson, Melvin, Gueyes (Lewis 75). Subs Not Used: Morrison, Westwood.

Blyth Spartans: McHugh; Nicholson, Watson, Buddle, Hutchinson, Hooks, Wearmouth (Robinson 69), Richardson, Reid (Davis 88), Wade, Dale (c). Subs Not Used: Morse, Mullin, Otte. Referee: Guy Stretton. Attendance: 481

Stamford in battle to pull back deficit

Stamford 2 Stourbridge 2

STOURBRIDGE surrendered two precious points when second from bottom side Stamford snatched a sickening 95th minute equaliser.

The Glassboys failed to clear from a last-gasp corner allowing substitute Chris Hamilton to hammer home and steal a share of the points.

Stourbridge appeared to have victory in the bag when they went 2-0 up just after the hour mark. But they let that advantage slip.

Stourbridge took the lead on 27 minutes when right winger Matt Dodd darted between two defenders and set up striker Karl Hawley to turn and fire home past Stamford goalkeeper Enol Ordenez.

Stamford came storming back but were kept at bay when Stourbridge goalkeeper Charlie Price pulled off two great saves within the space of 60 seconds to keep out Jake Duffy and then Elliott Hodge on the half hour mark.

Stamford's bad luck in front of goal continued on 51 minutes when Stourbridge full back Kristian Green was judged to have pushed Jordan Smith but Price saved Lee Beeson's resulting penalty attempt by guessing the right direction.

Stourbridge increased their lead on 61 minutes when Chris Lait picked out Hawley, whose shot was blocked but fell perfectly for Lait to follow up and slot home.

The advantage was short-lived with Stamford clawing a goal back three minutes later when the luckless Green turned a right wing Newman cross into his own net.

In the 95th minute the Glassboys failed to clear from a corner and the ball found its way through to Hamilton, who was waiting at the back post to pounce.

Ben misses Gamble on race prediction

TIPTON Harriers' Ben Gamble was too quick for his own good in the Stafford Harriers 'Limp Wrist' race at Castlefields. Gamble was first of the 118 entrants to complete the course in 26.43, but finished down the standings due to race rules.

The event requires athletes to make a pre-race prediction of their finishing time. They then run the five-mile course with no timing devices - the closest to their prediction lands the winning position. The ruling saw Gamble finish 37th after he came home 48 seconds quicker than his prediction.

Jack Hodgkinson (Stafford Harriers) won, with Tipton's Richard Rea fifth, six seconds ahead of schedule.

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PRESSURE ON PACE-SETTERS

Caldy 10 Stourbridge 15

THE trip to the Wirral saw Stour looking to put pressure on the pace-setters in National North and avenge a run of three narrow defeats to the hosts.

They deployed their attacking game early on and were rewarded with two well-taken tries. Resolute defence then saw Stour hold off a Caldly side that generated scant return for long periods of domination.

Stour's top try scorer centre Joe Heatley opened their account and winger Josh Trinham added to the tally, his try converted by Tom Mitchell.

Trinham's attention caused winger Nick Royle to spill one crossfield punt with the line begging, but Stour were unable to clear their lines and eventually conceded a short range converted try to Caldly tighthead Derek Salisbury.

The visitors were awarded a kickable early second half penalty but opted to go to the corner, only to find themselves denied by a handling error. Granted a second opportunity shortly after near Caldly's 10m line they opted to take the points and Mitchell extended the lead with a well-struck penalty. Caldly reduced the arrears thanks to the boot of Gavin Roberts.

Stourbridge Lions 19 Kidderminster 7

With the referee turning up 30 minutes after the game should have started both sides in this local derby were left wondering if the inevitable gloom would mean the game would be cut short.

Kidderminster won the toss and wisely opted to take advantage of the slope and wind, opting to kick at every opportunity.

After 15 minutes this tactic paid dividends when their kick found touch in the Stourbridge 22, and from a lineout went on to score a converted try. But that was their only score as the try seemed to galvanise the home side.

Owen Williams converted two penalties to take Lions within a point and an unconverted George Tildesley try put them in the lead at the interval.

The second half saw Will Fallows go down in the corner, but the conversion attempt hit the post. Another Williams penalty completed the scoring for Lions' third win in the trot.

This weekend they take on unbeaten league leaders Mosley Oak at Stourton Park.

Spreading the Glassboys word



Club chairman Andy Pountney, right, flies the flag for Stourbridge in South Africa

MEMORABLE cup runs have done little to stop Stourbridge from attracting onlookers far and beyond.

The Glassboys have made enjoyed success in both the FA Cup and FA Trophy with notable giant-killings against near-neighbours Kidderminster Harriers drawing attention to the War Memorial Ground side, who made it to the FA Cup second round against Eastleigh.

Their FA Trophy charge continues with a

trip to Braintree on Saturday and Glassboys fans are still spreading the word around the world. Chairman Andy Pountney, who featured heavily on BBC's Football Focus when Eastleigh visited Ambleside back in December, was captured flying the flag for the Black Country in Cape Town.

He is in South Africa watching the England cricket team in their Test series against the Proteas.



Domino's

Stourbridge Industrial Estate,
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